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AGE OF THE
NANDAS AND MAUḤ

Edited by

K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI

PUBLISHED FOR THE BHARATIYA ITIHAS PARISHAD

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P R E F A C E

The Bhāratiya Itihās Parishad was founded in 1937 with the specific object, among others, of preparing a New History of the Indian People in twenty volumes. The scheme was initiated by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Rector of the Parishad, and Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Editor-in-chief. Volume VI, THE VĀKĀṬAKA-GUPTA AGE (C. 200-550 A. D.) edited by Dr. R. C. Majumdar and Dr. A. S. Altekar was published for the Parishad in 1946 by Messrs Motilal Banarsidass of Lahore.

The plan for the present volume, IV in the series, was finalised in 1941, and thanks to the cooperation of the scholars who were invited to contribute the different chapters to it, the manuscript became ready for the press in 1945, and it was despatched to Sir Jadunath Sarkar in April of that year. The printing of the book was commenced, but before much progress was made, the Publishers met with a serious disaster in the Lahore riots. For this reason and others of a similar nature, the printing had to be stopped and could only be resumed in 1950 after the publishers had successfully rehabilitated themselves and found a new home in Banaras and Patna.

Meanwhile at the suggestion of the Government of India the scheme for the New History of the Indian People came to be amalgamated in 1948 with another started by the Indian History Congress, one of the terms of the amalgamation being that the Bhāratiya Itihās Parishad will not continue their series of the New History but may print or re-print the volumes already prepared. Accordingly the present volume is issued as an independent book styled AGE OF THE NANDAS AND MAURYS.

The names of the contributors of the different chapters are mentioned in the table of contents. I must thank them all for their valued cooperation and more for their patient waiting as the publication has been delayed so long for reasons beyond control. I must also express my gratitude to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, now President of the Indian Union, who has throughout,

taken a personal interest in the production and publication of the volume. Sir Jadunath Sarkar, although he felt constrained to give up his place as Editor-in-chief in 1946, continued to make kind enquiries about the progress of the work and my thanks are also due to him. They are also due to Dr. N. P. Chakravarti, formerly Director-General of Archaeology, for permission to reproduce the map of Aśoka's Empire published by him in *Ancient India*, No. 4. I must also thank the Director-General of Archaeology and the other authorities mentioned against particular illustrations for their permission to reproduce them in the volume. The authorities of the British Museum kindly supplied the casts of the coins illustrated in Plate I. Sri Jayachandra Vidyānkar, Secretary of the Bhāratiya Itihās Parishad, did me the favour of reading my chapter on Alexander's campaigns in India and offering suggestions of value. The publishers, it will be seen, have spared no effort to make the volume worthy of their great standing among Indian publishers. The reader will notice that the transliteration is not uniform, but combines two systems using ś-sh, and c-ch indiscriminately; this has been due in part to my ill health at the time I prepared the book for the press, and I crave the indulgence of the reader for any inconvenience he may feel on this account.

Nileśvar, Madras.

K. A. N.

26. 12. 1951.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	iii
Table of contents	v
List of Plates and Maps	x
Abbreviations	xi
	PAGE.
Introduction by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri	1
 CHAPTER I 	
India in the Age of the Nandas	
<i>By Prof. H. C. Raychaudhuri</i>	
I. Empire of Magadha	9
The Nandas	11
Mahāpadma	13
Administration	21
Later Nandas	23
II. Regions beyond the Magadhan Empire	26
(1) North-West India	27
A. Physical Aspects	27
B. The advance of Persia to the Indus	30
C. Successors of the Achaemenids	34
(2) The Far South	42
 CHAPTER II 	
Alexander's Campaigns in India	
<i>By Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri</i>	
Subjugation of the Swat valley	47
Aornos	51
Taxila	55
Battle of the Jhelum	57
After Jhelum	64
On the Beas	66
The Return	68
Republican tribes	70
Voyage along the lower Indus	74

Exploration and return to Babylon	.....	76
Results	.....	78

CHAPTER III

India in early Greek and Latin Literature

By Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri

Introductory	.....	81
Scylax	.....	82
Herodotus	.....	84
Ctesias	.....	86
Historians of Alexander	.....	87
Greek Ambassadors	.....	89
India : Size	.....	91
Climate	.....	92
Rivers	.....	93
Fertility of Soil	.....	94
Minerals	.....	95
Animals	.....	95
Legends	.....	100
People	.....	101
Taxila	.....	103
Sages	.....	104
Philosophers	.....	106
North-Western India	.....	108
Arms	.....	109
Skill in arts	.....	110
Slaves	.....	111
Deposits	.....	112
Seven classes of people	.....	113
Marriage and occupation rules	.....	116
Food and drink	.....	116
Crime and punishment	.....	117
Pātaliputra	.....	117
Women in the Palace	.....	119
Administration	.....	120

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III

Early Foreign Coins in India (*Nanda-Maurya Period*)

By. Dr. J. N. Banerjea	123
------------------------	-------	-----

CHAPTER IV

Chandragupta and Bindusara*By Prof. H. C. Raychaudhuri*

Chandragupta	—	132
Bindusāra	—	165

CHAPTER V

Mauryan Polity*By Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri*

Sources	—	171
Empire of Magadha	—	172
Republics	—	173
Foreign Models	—	173
Royal Power	—	174
The King	—	175
Ministers and Council	—	176
King not owner of land	—	177
Bureaucracy	—	178
Central offices	—	179
District and Town administration	—	181
Villages	—	181
Provinces	—	182
Finance	—	183
Justice	—	185
Foreign Policy	—	187
Army	—	188
Review	—	189
Excursus on the Arthaśāstra	—	190

CHAPTER VI

Asoka and his Successors*By Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri*

Sources	—	202
Name	—	207
Early life	—	208
Adoption of Buddhism	—	210
Rock Edicts	—	212
Pilgrimage	—	212

Other edicts	----	213
Tradition : Third Council	----	214
Buddhist Missions	----	216
Khotan	----	220
Nepal	----	221
Assam and Bengal	-----	221
Tribes	-----	222
Administration	-----	223
Yuktas	-----	226
Aśoka's part	-----	228
Religious policy	-----	229
Aśoka's Dharma	-----	234
The Successors of Aśoka	-----	243

CHAPTER VII

South India and Ceylon*By Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri*

South India and Ceylon	---	249
------------------------	-----	-----

CHAPTER VIII

Industry, Trade and Currency*By Dr. U. N. Ghoshal*

Introductory	-----	260
Industry	-----	261
Trade	-----	269
The Organisation of Industry and Trade	-----	274
State Industrial and Commercial Policy	-----	275
Currency	-----	279

CHAPTER IX

Religion**By Dr. P. C. Bagchi*

Literary Background	....	284
Brahmanism	-----	287
The ascetic movement	-----	293
The Ajivika and Nirgrantha movements	-----	295
Buddhism	-----	299
Theistic Movements	-----	304

CHAPTER X

Language and Literature*By* Dr. S. K. Chatterji and Dr. V. Raghavan

I. Language	—	308
II. Learning, Literature and Popular Life : Brahmanical Learning	—	324
Sanskrit Language	—	325
Sanskrit Grammar	—	326
Classical Sanskrit Literature and Fine Arts	—	329
Philosophy	—	334
Arthasāstra	—	336
Kāma-Śāstra	—	337
Popular Worship	—	338
Popular lores	—	338
Architecture	—	339
Prākṛit, Buddhistic and Jain literature	—	340

CHAPTER XI

Mauryan Art*By* Dr. Niharranjan Ray

I. Introduction	—	342
II. Socio-historical Background	—	348
III. Columns	—	361
IV. Animal Figures	—	369
V. Alleged Mauryan Sculptures	—	378
VI. Cave Architecture	—	384
VII. Concluding Remarks	—	387
Bibliography	—	392
Index	—	401

AGE OF THE NANDAS AND MAURYS

List of plates

- I. Foreign coins (British Museum) with key—P. 122.
- II. The Lion-crowned column of Basarh (DA)
- III. The Lion-crowned column of Lauriya Nandangarh (DA)
- IV. Elephant Capital, Sankissa (DA)
- V. Bull Capital, Rampurva (DA)
- VI. Lion Capital, Rampurva (DA)
- VII. Sarnath Lion Capital (DA)
- VIII. Lion Capital, Sanchi (DA)
- IX. Rock-cut Elephant, Dhauli (DA)
- X. Elephant from the abacus of Sarnath Capital (DA)
- XI. Horse from the abacus of Sarnath Capital (DA)
- XII. Bull from the abacus of Sarnath Capital (DA)
- XIII. Lion from the abacus of Sarnath Capital (DA)
- XIV. Yaksha from Patna, front view (Patna Museum)
- XV. Yaksha from Patna, back view (Patna Museum)
- XVI. Yaksha from Patna, front view (Patna Museum)
- XVII. Yaksha from Patna, back view (Patna Museum)
- XVIII. Stone torso of a Jaina image, Lohanipur (Patna Museum)
- XIX. Baroda Yaksha, back view (Mathura Museum)
- XX. Parkham Yaksha, (Mathura Museum)
- XXI. Didarganj Yakshi, front view (Patna Museum)
- XXII. Didarganj Yakshi, back view (Patna Museum)
- XXIII. Besnagar Yakshi (Indian Museum, Calcutta)
- XXIV. Terracotta from Pataliputra (Patna Museum)
- XXV. Terracotta from Pataliputra (Patna Museum)
- XXVI. Terracotta from Pataliputra (Patna Museum)
- XXVII. Terracotta from Pataliputra (Patna Museum)
- XXVIII. Terracotta from Pataliputra (Patna Museum)
- XXIX. Plans of Sudama and Lomas Rishi caves (after Fergusson)
- XXX. Lomas Rishi Cave, facade (DA)

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Maps

1. North-Western India	Page 80
2. The Empire of Aśoka	„ 248

List of Abbreviations

ABORI.	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute
Ait. B.	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
ASI.	} Archaeological survey of India, Annual Reports
ASR.	
BMC.	British Museum Catalogue
BSOS.	Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London
BS.	Brahma Sūtras
Bom. Gaz.	} Bombay Gazetteer
BG.	
CAI.	Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India (in the British Museum) b; John Allan, London, 1936
CHI.	Cambridge History of India Vol. I.
CII.	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum. Vol. I. Inscriptions of Asoka Ed. E. Hultzsch.
CL.	Carmichael Lectures
DKA	Dynasties of the Kali Age (Pargiter, London, 1913)
DV.	Dipavamsa.
DPPN	Dictionary of Pali Proper names
EHI.	Early History of India by V. A. Smith, (4th Edition Oxford, 1924.)
EI or EpInd.	Epigraphia Indica
HC.	Harsha Charita
Ind. Alt.	Indische Alterthumskunde (Lassen)
IC.	Indian Culture
JRAS.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London
JHS.	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JNSI.	Journal of Numismatic Society of India, Bombay
JBORS.	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna

- JASB. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
 Jat. Jatakas
 JISŌA. Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta.
 KA. Kauṭilya's *Arthasāstra*
 KS Breloer, Kautilya Studien
 Mbh. Mahābhārata
 NIA. New Indian Antiquary
 MV. Mahāvamsa
 PE. Pillar Edict
 PTS. Pali Text Society
 RE. Rock Edict
 SBE. Sacred Books of the East
 WZKM. Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes.
 ZDMG. Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, Leipzig
 ZII. Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik

ERRATA

Page	Line	For	Read
20	21	<i>Bṛihakathā</i>	<i>Bṛihatkathā</i>
46	Beg. of Para 2	326	327
51	28	fom	from
74	12	Alexander'	Alexander's
77	13	Lenonnatus	Leonnatus
132	26	<i>Chakravartain</i>	<i>Chakravartin</i>
144	4	draw	draws
152	13	<i>Indus</i>	<i>Indus</i>
190	25	hapiness	happiness
248	29	amporium	emporium
318	11	<i>Mriecchaktaikā</i>	<i>Mṛīcchakatikā</i>
337	2	description	descriptions

INTRODUCTION

THE natural frontiers of India, the mountains and the seas that serve to emphasise her inherent unity, have seldom acted as barriers to her intercourse with foreign lands. The progress of Indian historical studies has shown that the isolation of India is a relatively recent feature, and that in the earlier epochs of her long and by no means uneventful history, she maintained live contacts with many lands, far and near, to the mutual advantage of both sides. The age of the Nandas and Mauryas (c. 400-185 B. C.) witnessed great changes sweeping over the face of Western Asia, over lands with which India had much to do from the dawn of history, and account must be taken of their effects, direct and indirect, on the political, economic and artistic life of India. In this seminal period when Indo-Aryan civilization may be said to have attained its maturity, India did not hesitate to borrow political and economic plans and artistic motifs from abroad, and put them to the most appropriate uses in her own institutions and monuments. Thus to view the history of India on a wider background and point to her contacts with her neighbours is by no means to detract from the independence and originality of her culture; but only to lay stress on the catholicity of its outlook and taste, and its genius for drawing sustenance and strength from diverse sources. For in no single instance did borrowing result in mere imitation, but led to a thoughtful and harmonious integration of the borrowed feature with the indigenous setting in which it was placed.

Alexander, Chandragupta, Chāṇakya, and Aśoka dominate the period. The overthrow of the Achaemenid empire of Persia by Alexander, his campaigns in the north-west of India, intended perhaps more to complete and round off his conquest of Persia than to further a scheme of world conquest, and his early death (323 B. C.) followed by the partition of his extensive empire into large territorial monarchies formed a chain of events that in one way and another prepared the ground for the extension of the Mauryan empire in the North-West, and fixed the political map of the regions

with which that empire was to maintain a fairly lively intercourse for well over a century. The revolt of Bactria and Parthia from Syria (*c.* 250 B. C.) was the only notable change; but during our period their independence was far from assured, and the revolts had little historical significance as yet to India except perhaps by inducing the distracted Seleucid rulers of Syria to maintain friendly relations with their powerful neighbours on the east, the Maurya emperors. The importance of Alexander's Indian campaign has been both exaggerated and under-estimated. There was no Macedonian occupation of Indian territory worth the name, and what there was of it lasted only a few years. Yet there ensued two abiding results. The monarchies and tribal republics of the North-West were much exhausted by their sanguinary conflicts with the invader; this paved the way for the easy establishment of the Mauryan empire in these lands by weakening their power of military resistance to the advance of the empire, and possibly also by teaching them that submission to a strong state within the country was the best protection against the recurrence of danger from outside. Secondly, the Macedonian episode opened an era of some centuries during which Hellenism was to be the dominant factor of government and civilization on the western confines of the Indian world. The contact between India and the Mediterranean world became more direct and constant. And this is a fact of immense significance not only to the history of India, but to that of the world.

In marked contrast to the precise and detailed notices of Greek and Latin authors on Alexander and India, are the vague and contradictory legends which issue from various sources and constitute the only aid to our knowledge of Chandragupta and Chānakya. There is little reason to doubt the truth of the main story in its outline : an unusually valiant Kshatriya warrior and a Brahmin statesman of great learning and resourcefulness joined to bring about the downfall of an avaricious dynasty of hated rulers, and establish a new empire which made the good of the people the object of its chief concern; they freed the land from the foreign invader, and from inter-fal tyranny, and established a state which in due course embraced practically the whole of India;

together they organised one of the most powerful and efficient bureaucracies known to the history of the world. Kshatra (Imperium) and Brahma (Sacerdotium) came together and engaged in the most fruitful cooperation for the great good of the land and the people. The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya (Chāṇakya) holds a place in the literature of Indian polity corresponding to that of the Mauryan empire in Indian history; there are two sides to both. The Mauryan empire was the culmination of a long centripetal development of which Magadha had become the nucleus for centuries; but its administrative system made new and bold departures from ancient practices and started innovations inspired by alien models, perhaps immediately Hellenistic, but traceable ultimately to Achaemenid Persia. Likewise, the *Arthaśāstra* is the culmination of the Indian political thought of several generations on the one side, while on the other, large sections of it were consciously based on the study of political practice, a good part of it doubtless contemporary and foreign.

The forty years of Aśoka's rule form a great epoch not only in the history of India, but in the annals of mankind. In the remarkable series of his inscriptions found over the entire length and breadth of India, we hear the authentic voice of the great emperor explaining the purpose behind many of his actions. This enables us to check and control the numerous legends that have gathered round his name, as around the names of all great leaders of humanity. One war of conquest was enough to turn the mind of this monarch for ever from all thought of war and military conquest, so sensitive was he to the sufferings of men, and indeed of animals as well. He found instruction in the company of the Sangha and solace in the religion of the Buddha. His abstention from war and conquest was by no means a mere negation of a part of the king's duty as it was generally understood; the true emperor was a conqueror (*vijigīshu*) according to the political theory of Ancient India, and Aśoka accepted this ideal, and practised it vigorously for the rest of his life; only the conquest he pursued was of a higher order than that dictated by lust of power or territory; he became a *vijigīshu* in the cause of Dhammavijaya. But he was no

visionary who sacrificed temporal well-being in the pursuit of spiritual objects. He combined energy and benevolence, justice and charity, as no one else did. He bent all the material resources of his great empire to the ethical education of his subjects and to the organisation of peace within his realm, and universal amity and order throughout the world. Aśoka strikes us as the most modern of all the great rulers of India.

The work of the historian, unlike that of the novelist, is limited by the nature of his sources. Little or no evidence worth the name is forthcoming on many matters of interest in our period, and several questions that naturally rise in the mind as we recall its main events have to remain unanswered. Did Chandragupta deliver his attack on the Nanda empire at its heart and effect a revolution in the capital to start with, or did he begin by building up his power in the North-West at the expense of the Greeks and then proceed against the Nandas? What exactly was the role of Kauṭilya in the events that led up to the *abhisheka* of Chandragupta? How long did Chandragupta take to build up his empire, and who were the enemies, if any, who gave him fight? Did he turn Jain and abdicate towards the close of his reign as Jaina legends allege? What happened in the Mauryan empire during close upon three decades of Bindusāra's rule? We hear little of that monarch besides his love of Greek wine and figs, and his futile effort to buy a Greek philosopher. Yet this king could not have lacked ability as soldier and statesman, for he successfully guarded the vast empire, perhaps even extended it into the Deccan, and handed it over intact to his successor. Was Aśoka's succession to the throne disputed? Did he rule as emperor to the end of his life, or did he abdicate and live as a monk in his last years? And why did not the empire, reared by three generations of exceptionally talented rulers, hold together for many years after Aśoka's time?

Historical truth is many-sided, and there is always scope for differences of interpretation of the evidence at hand; the scope for such differences is particularly wide in our period in which almost all the sources bear a certain bias—Brahmanical, Buddhist, Jaina—and offer divergent accounts of the same set of events. As nothing is gained and something may

be lost by an artificial smoothening of these differences, it has appeared best to leave untouched the slightly differing views of the contributors of the different chapters and give the reader the opportunity of realizing the difficulty of reaching categorical conclusions on complex issues.

The account of the period opens with a chapter (I) on India in the Age of the Nandas from the pen of Prof. H. C. Raychaudhuri who reconstructs, with great ingenuity, from very meagre sources a vivid picture of the establishment of the empire of the Nandas and its polity; in his survey of the outlying parts of India, he offers a succinct treatment of the political geography of North-Western India and of the advance of Persia and its rule on the banks of the Indus, and prepares the ground for the detailed study of the Indian campaigns of Alexander by the present writer (Chap. II). The hardest fights in which that great Macedonian warrior engaged were all fought on Indian soil, and his Indian opponents, though they did not win victories against him, generally won his approbation of their fighting qualities. These campaigns have been treated at some length, and their place in the history of India and of the world has been adverted to above. Alexander was accompanied by several scientists and literateurs whose writings communicated to Europe a vast amount of knowledge about India; they also formed the basis of many of the observations made by the ambassadors of the Hellenistic monarchs to the Mauryan empire, of whom Megasthenes is, of course, the most celebrated; in one chapter (III) all the notices of India by Greek and Latin authors bearing on our period have been brought together and reviewed also at full length with a view to put the reader in possession of most of the primary data now available; the chapter is followed appropriately by a comprehensive note, by Dr. J. N. Banerjea, on the foreign coins of the period found in India.

The thread of the main story is taken up again by Prof. Raychaudhuri in the chapter (IV) on Chandragupta and Bindusāra. A brief criticism of the sources is followed by a discussion of chronology which may with advantage be read together with a further discussion of the same topic that

follows in the chapter on Aśoka (VI). Prof. Raychaudhuri holds that the classical sources were well aware of the overthrow of the Nandas by Chandragupta though it might appear to some that in speaking of his overthrow of the existing government and liberation of India they meant only the destruction of the Macedonian domination in the Indus valley. He discounts heavily the part attributed to Chāṇakya in the internal revolution that resulted in the fall of the Nandas and the establishment of the Mauryan empire, and is inclined to consider Chandragupta as the hero of the drama. He has also grave doubts about the age and authenticity of the *Arthaśāstra*. But the whole of his narrative shows that he is quite fully aware of the possibility of other views being taken on these subjects and of the need for putting before his readers all the available evidence to enable them to form their own opinions.

A brief study of the Mauryan polity, based mainly on the *Arthaśāstra*, follows (Chap. V); this sums up the state of government and administrative organisation as it was in the reigns of the first two emperors and provides the background necessary for the proper appraisal of the innovations of Aśoka in the administrative system, to which references occur in the inscriptions of that ruler. The present writer is inclined to accept the *Arthaśāstra* as a valid picture of conditions that prevailed in the Mauryan empire and has attempted to explain the basis for this view in an excursus on the *Arthaśāstra* at the end of the chapter.

The chapter (VI) on Aśoka and his successors, also by the present writer, aims at presenting the primary evidence arranged under convenient heads with the necessary minimum of comment and criticism. The object has been to let the inscriptions tell the story as far as possible and to accept legendary evidence only to the extent to which it works in with and is not contradicted by the inscriptions. Aśoka's relations with the Sangha, the nature and content of the Dhamma he propagated, the extent of success that attended his missionary efforts, and the question whether he was both monk and monarch at one and the same time have been considered in some detail; the legends connecting Aśoka with Kashmir, Khotan and Nepal have also been considered with

some care. All is darkness after Aśoka; the faint gleams from late and diverse sources, the earliest being the *Divyāvadāna* and Purāṇas, just render the darkness visible; no connected history is possible here; the available evidence has been summed up and the process of the dissolution of the Mauryan empire has been left largely to the imagination of the reader aided by the few scraps of evidence set forth at the end of the chapter. A brief account (Chap. VII) of South India and Ceylon rounds off the political history of the period; the vexed question of the identity and location of Satiyaputa has been discussed; and all the references to Nandas and Mauryas in early Tamil literature have been described in their proper setting and their historical value determined; and the evidence of the early Brāhmī inscriptions of the Tamil districts and of Ceylon, as also that of the Ceylonese tradition in the *Mahāvamsa* assessed.

The remaining four chapters in the volume are devoted to studies of different aspects of the culture of the period. Dr. U. N. Ghoshal describes the Industry, Trade and Currency of the times in a chapter (VIII) which is as well documented, as it is replete with significant facts culled from various sources and set forth with remarkable lucidity and cogency. A perusal of this chapter and portions of the chapter on Art which form an excellent supplement to it, may well set at rest the doubts, sometimes expressed by scholars, that the state of technical arts depicted in the pages of the *Arthaśāstra* appears to be too advanced for the age of the Mauryas; for relying only to a very little extent on the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra*, the writers of these chapters have sought to trace the trend of development from earlier epochs up to and beyond the Mauryan epoch, and to indicate clearly the place of that epoch in the course of this development.

In the chapter (IX) on Religion Dr. P. C. Bagchi makes a penetrating study of the ascetic movements in general, of Brahmanism, Ājīvikas and Nirgranthas, as well as of Buddhism and of the beginnings of theistic movements; he may appear to rely rather more on Buddhist texts than on other lines of evidence, but that has seldom stood in the way of the justice and truth of the interpretations offered by him. He has not included in the scope of his chapter forms of popular worship

centring round flag-staffs, yakshas and so on, which have been noticed incidentally in the two succeeding chapters. The chapter (X) on Language and Literature and the life of the people is contributed by two scholars. Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, the most competent linguist of India, offers a comprehensive and critical survey of the distribution and development of language and script in the various parts of Mauryan India. Dr. V. Raghavan's contribution in this chapter on Learning and Literature and popular life is the necessary complement to that of Dr. Bagchi on Religion. Depending more or less on exclusively Sanskrit and Brahmanical sources, Dr. Raghavan has produced a compact and illuminating account of the learning and literature of the age in their various branches, of the rites and forms of worship prevalent among the different strata of society, and of the habits, beliefs and modes of thought prevalent among the common people.

The final chapter (XI) on Art from the pen of Dr. Nihar-
ranjan Ray is a comprehensive and up-to-date survey of a difficult and interesting subject. The great acumen with which the author traces the development of the artistic tradition within the Mauryan period, even within a single reign, and adopts tests for the separation of the play of indigenous from that of foreign inspiration will not escape the attention of the discerning reader. Dr. Ray does not hesitate to declare as post-Mauryan several pieces that are generally held to be Mauryan on grounds of the material and technique which are hardly adequate in his eyes. His main thesis is that all the Mauryan art accessible to us is court art strongly marked by extraneous influences, Hellenistic and Achaemenian.

Viewed from any angle, the age of the Mauryan empire was an age of great endeavour and noble achievement. Politically India became one, and the cultural unity in the midst of diversity that has always characterised her civilization became more marked than ever in this period. India, was in the van of human progress, and one of her greatest emperors sent forth into the world the message of universal peace and love. It is to be hoped that the different chapters in this volume may help its readers in some measure to recall the life and happenings of that great epoch.

CHAPTER I

INDIA IN THE AGE OF THE NANDAS

I. Empire of Magadha

The dominant characteristic of the period with which we propose to deal is the rise and growth of a New Monarchy in Eastern India of which we have a presage in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* :

“In this eastern quarter (*prāchyām diśi*) whatever kings there are of the eastern peoples, they are anointed for imperial rule (*sāmrajya*); ‘Oh emperor’ (*samrāt*) they style him when anointed.”¹

The eastern peoples (*prāchyas*) are not specified by the *Brāhmaṇa* in the same way as those of the South, the North and the Middle Country. But there can hardly be any doubt that they lived to the east of the *dhruvā madhyamā diś* and thus answer to the *Prasii* of the Greek writers and the confederate nations who dominated the valleys of the lower Ganges and the Son. The most eminent among these nations was Magadha which embraced the modern districts of Patna and Gaya.

Several factors contributed to the greatness of the new star in the firmament of Indian politics. It occupied a strategic position between the upper and the lower parts of the Gangetic plain. It possessed an impregnable fort in a mountain fastness and built another at the confluence of two mighty streams, the highways of trade and commerce in those days. It had a fertile soil and its resources included an elephant corps which was truly formidable.

But advantages of position and material resources alone cannot raise a nation to eminence. It is the character and the spirit of the people “that give all their life and efficacy to them”. As in Western Europe, so in Magadha, we have a commingling of races and cultures. Kikatas and other *Anāryas* blended here with priestly and fighting clans of Aryan

1. Keith *Rigveda Br.*, p 330.

India as Celts did with Latins and Teutons in Gaul and some neighbouring lands of Western Europe. It is possible to detect two strands in the cultural as well as the ethnic texture of the Magadhan people. The same race that produced fierce warriors and exterminators of princes and peoples listened to the quiet teachings of Māhāvīra the Jina and Gautama the Buddha. It played a part in the evolution of a universal religion as it did in the foundation of a pan-Indian empire. The wide outlook of the Magadhans was not a little due to the absence of the rigidity that marked the social polity that evolved on the banks of the Sarasvatī and the upper Ganges. In their realm Brāhmaṇas could fraternize with *Vrātyas*. Kshatriyas could admit plebeian (Śūdra) girls to their harem, blue-blooded aristocrats could be done to death or otherwise deprived of the throne to make room for the child of a *nagara-śobhinī*, and a barber could aspire to imperial dignity.

Magadhan kings and statesmen were sometimes ruthless in their methods. But they had the wisdom to establish an efficient system of government in which high bureaucratic functionaries (*mahāmātras*) as well as village headmen (*grāmikas*) had their share. Foreign observers speak with evident approbation of their judiciary, roads, irrigation works and care of alien residents. While not fighting shy of metaphysics, they laid great stress on exertion (*parākrama*) in this mundane life with the object of welding the diverse elements of greater India (Jambuvdīpa) into a unit bound by political as well as cultural ties. This was facilitated by the ancient idea of the all-encompassing *Purusha*—later called *Mahā purusha* (The Great Being)—and his political counterpart the Sole Sovereign (*Īkārāt* or *Chakrvarīn*). In the Magadha minstrelsy the rulers of the Prasii had an instrument which they could use for popular education and inspiration in times of trouble and despondency. We owe much of our knowledge of ancient times to these bards.

The early dynastic history of Magadha is shrouded in darkness. We have occasional glimpses of war-lords and statesmen, some probably entirely mythical, others having more appearance of reality. True history commences with

the famous Bimbisāra of the Haryaṅka *kula* who launched his people in that career of conquest and aggrandisement which only ended when Aśoka sheathed his sword after the conquest of Kalinga.

The family of Bimbisāra was responsible for the fortification of a village at the confluence of the Son and the Ganges which grew into the city of Pāṭaliputra and soon replaced the old capital, Girivraja-Rājagṛiha. It also saw, and actively supported, the growth of the religious movements associated with Vardhamāna Mahāvīra and Gautama Buddha.

According to Buddhist tradition the Bimbisārids made room for a new line styled Śaiśunāga. The Purāṇic chronicles, however, do not distinguish between the two families and make Śaiśunāga the common ancestor of the kings belonging to both the groups.

Śaiśunāga rule seems to have ended in a tragedy. The last notable ruler of the line fell a victim to a plot engineered by an all powerful official who had "advanced to too near a place in the confidence of the monarch".

The Nandas

With the passing of the Śaiśunāgas from the stage and the assumption of supreme authority by the regicide, who is no other than the famous founder of the Nanda line, we enter upon a new epoch in the history of this country. For the first time we have an empire which transcends the boundaries of the Gangetic basin. It is not a loose assemblage of virtually independent states or feudal baronies which have a wholesome respect for the power and might of a *roi soleil*, but an integrated monarchy under an *Ekarāṭ* (single ruler) possessed of vast resources in men and money. The old, almost uninterrupted, ascendancy of clans claiming the blue blood of Kshatriyas is at an end. The new ruler is a *novus homo* who wages a war to the knife on the Kshatriyas and rouses the relentless hostility of the most astute of the politically minded Brāhmaṇas of the age. He incarnates, according to the Purāṇic chroniclers, the spirit of the Iron Age (Kali) and his accession is taken to mark a chronological epoch like the birth of Parikshit several centuries earlier.

Unfortunately the chroniclers disagree among themselves as to the exact period of the rule of the first Nanda and show divergence from Jain and Buddhist traditions in regard to the duration of the dynasty as a whole. In the absence of a clear and unanimous tradition speculation is unprofitable. The family was still on the throne of Pāṭaliputra when Chandragupta, who was then but a youth,¹ met Alexander in the Punjab in 326 B. C. It had possibly come to power before the death of Xenophon sometime after 355 B. C. That famous historian refers in his *Cyropædia* to a powerful king of India who aspired to be an umpire in disputes between the great nations of Western Asia and was 'a very wealthy man', a description that has a special application to the Nandas. The enormous wealth of the kings of the line is vouched for by all our authorities. It is hinted at by the most famous of the Chinese pilgrims and was known to the Tamil poets of the Śaṅgam. Xenophon was referring to the sixth century B. C. But his description of the Indian monarch may have been reminiscent of his own days.

Some scholars read a reference to a Nanda era in the Hāthīgumphā inscription of Khāravela. No such era was however known to Alberuni who gives a concise account of the reckonings prevalent in his days in Chapter XLIX of his work on India. The interpretation of the expression *ti-vasa-sata*, which measures the interval between Nandarāja and Khāravela, is also a matter of controversy. In any case, the uncertainty of the precise date of the Hāthīgumphā record and the doubtful character of the readings of several of its passages, make the chronological references of little value in determining with accuracy the exact epoch of the first Nanda.

Curiously enough the dynastic name Nanda is not known to any contemporary authority. It is no doubt mentioned in the *Kauṭīliya Arthaśāstra*, which is traditionally assigned to the age of Chandragupta Maurya. But the work contains references which point to a much later date. The reading 'Nandrum' in the place of 'Alexandrum' suggested by some

1. M'Crindle, *Invasion of Alexander*, p. 311.

modern writers in the narrative of Justin, who epitomises the account of Pompeius Trogus and may have had access to earlier sources, is absolutely unjustified. Among extant works, which may, with some degree of plausibility, be assigned to a period anterior to the Ceylonese chronicles and the Purāṇas, it is the *Milinda-pañho* which refers to 'the royal family of Nanda'. But an earlier notice of Nandarāja is contained in two passages of the famous Hāthīgumphā record of Khāravela ;

Pañchame cha dāni vase Namdarāja ti-vasa-sata oghāṭitam Tanasuliyā-vāṭā-panādim nagaram pavesayati.

'And then, in the fifth year, (Khāravela) caused the canal, opened out by king Nanda three hundred (or one hundred and three) years back, to be brought into the capital from the Tanasuliya road''.

Again, in connection with the twelfth year of Khāravela's reign we have a reference to *Namdarājajitam Kaliṅga-jana samnivesam* (or, according to another reading, *Namda-rājanitam Kaliṅga Jina-samnivesa*), that is, a place for assemblage of people or a Jaina shrine in Kaliṅga acquired by king Nanda.

For a fairly connected history of the dynasty we have to make use of Indian tradition. Indian writers were concerned with the period of Nanda rule partly as marking a stage in a socio-political movement, and as an episode in the story of Jaina pontiffs, and partly as an important element in the *Chandragupta-kathā* of which we have Buddhist fragments in the *Milinda-Pañho* and the Ceylonese chronicles and commentaries, and Brahmanical versions in the Purāṇas, folk-tales, one famous drama, and certain works on polity.

Mahāpadma

The first Nanda bore the name Mahāpadma or Mahāpadmapati, "sovereign of an infinite host" or "of immense wealth", according to the Purāṇas, and Ugrasena according to the *Mahābodhivaṃsa*. The Purāṇas describe him as a son of the last king of the preceding line by a Śūdra woman. Jaina works, on the other hand, represent Nanda as the son of a courtesan by a barber. This tradition finds support in

the classical account of the pedigree of Alexander's Magadhan contemporary who was the predecessor of Chandragupta Maurya. Referring to this prince who occupied the throne of Pāṭaliputra when, according to Plutarch, Chandragupta met Alexander in the Punjab, Curtius¹ informs us that "his father was in fact a barber, scarcely staving off hunger by his daily earnings, but who, from his being not uncomely in person, had gained the affections of the queen, and was by her influence advanced to too near a place in the confidence of the reigning monarch. Afterwards, however, he treacherously murdered his sovereign, and then, under the pretence of acting as guardian to the royal children, usurped the supreme authority, and having put the young princes to death begot the present king".

There has been some difference of opinion as to whether "the present king" (Agrammes) of Curtius ruling in 326 B. C. refers to the first Nanda himself or to one of his sons. The classical testimony leaves no room for doubt on the point. Agrammes was born to the purple. His father had already usurped supreme authority and put the legitimate heirs to the throne to death. The description of "the present king" can hardly be applied to the first Nanda who was *gaṇikākushijanmī* (born of a courtesan) and whose father did not exercise sovereign power. We have therefore to conclude that Agrammes, or Xandrames as he is called by Diodorus, belonged to the second generation of the usurping family and his father was the first Nanda, the Mahāpadma-Ugrasena of Indian tradition.

The murdered sovereign must have belonged to the line that preceded the Nandas on the throne of Pāṭaliputra. The ruler who answers best to the description given by Curtius and Diodorus is Kākavarṇa-Kālāsoka whose tragic end is alluded to in the *Harshacharita*, and whose sons—nine or ten in number—were, according to Buddhist tradition, ousted by Ugrasena Nanda. The name Agrammes is possibly a distorted form of the Sanskrit Augrasainya, "son or descendant of Ugrasena". It may be noted in this connection that Augrasainya as a royal epithet may be traced back to the

1. M'Crindle, *Invasion of Alexander*, p. 220.

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa where it occurs as a patronymic of Yud-dhāmśrausṭi.¹

The rise of an all powerful official in the time of the later Śaiśunāgas probably indicates that the system of administration had undergone remarkable changes since the days of Bimbisāra. That monarch had exercised a rigid control over his *mahāmātras*, dismissing those who advised him badly and rewarding those whose counsel he approved. The result of the "purge" was the emergence of the type of official represented by Varshakāra and Sunītha whose rigour and efficiency are well illustrated in the Buddhist Texts. The situation must have changed considerably towards the end of the Śaiśunāga epoch. The career of Ugrasena reminds one of that of Bijjala in a later age, and his early relations with the preceding royal family had important points of resemblance with that between Cardinal Mazarin and the family of Louis XIII. If tradition is to be believed the office of a chief minister was maintained throughout the Nanda period, though the functionary in question never reached the pre-eminent position that Ugrasena occupied in the days of his royal master. Jaina and Hindu writers refer to a distinguished line of imperial chancellors from Kalpaka to Śakaṭāla and Rākshasa. It is difficult to say if these traditional figures had any historical reality. They are not mentioned in contemporary or semi-contemporary documents. But "advisers of the king", very small in number, but most respected on account of their high character and wisdom, are mentioned by Greek observers who wrote about conditions in the fourth century B. C.

Next to the "advisers of the king" probably stood the "generals of the army". One official of this class, Bhadrāsāla, finds prominent mention in the *Milinda-Pañho*. The Nanda army was a powerful fighting machine and we are told by the classical writers that the last king of the line "kept in the field for guarding the approaches of his country, twenty

1. The use of patronymics, or metronymics, instead of the personal name, is by no means rare in Indian history. The cases of Assakenus, Porus, Pandion show that in several cases classical writers did not take the trouble of acquainting themselves with the personal designations of princes.

thousand cavalry, and two hundred thousand infantry, besides two thousand four-horsed chariots, and, what was the most formidable force of all, a troop of elephants which ran up to the number of three thousand".¹ Diodorus and Plutarch raise the number of elephants to four thousand and six thousand respectively. The latter puts the strength of the army of the Gangetic nations at eighty thousand horse, two hundred thousand foot, eight thousand war chariots, besides six thousand fighting elephants.

It is no wonder that the lord of such an immense host should aspire to be a sole monarch, an *Ekarāt*, of the vast regions stretching from the Himalayas to the Godāvāri or its neighbourhood. The historians of Alexander speak of the most powerful peoples who dwelt beyond the Beas as being under one sovereign. Q. Curtius Rufus, for instance, gives the following particulars: "Beyond the river (Hyphasis or Beas) lay extensive deserts. . . Next came the Ganges, the largest river in all India, the farther bank of which was inhabited by two nations, the Gangaridae and the Prasii, whose king was Agrammes"². The account of Diodorus is similar. But he calls the king Xandrames instead of Agrammes. The account of Plutarch, or the English translation, seems to suggest that the "Gandaritai" (Gangaridae) and the "Prasii" had separate kings, and this is said to find support in the number of horses, war-chariots and fighting elephants assigned to the "kings" of the two nations, which is larger than those assigned to Agrammes-Xandrames by Curtius and Diodorus. But the number of foot soldiers remains the same in all the accounts. The discrepancies regarding the number of elephants etc. may be due to divergence of tradition rather than reinforcement by contingents supplied by an allied king. Pliny informs us that the Prasii surpass in power and glory every other people in all India, their capital being Palibothra (Pāṭaliputra), after which some call the people itself the Palibothri, nay, even the whole tract of the Ganges.

1. M'Crindle, *Invasion*, pp. 221-22.

2. *Ibid.*

Jaina writers refer to the subjugation by Nanda's minister of the whole country down to the seas :—

*Samudravan śebhya āsamudramāpi śriyaḥ
upāyahastairākṛishya tataḥ so'kṛita Nandasāt'ṛi*

Purāṇic chroniclers speak of the extermination by Mahāpadma of all *kshatriya*s. This is taken to imply that he uprooted all the *kshatriya* families which ruled contemporaneously with the Śaiśunāgas (*tulya-kālam bhavishyanti sarve hy ete mahīkshītah*)¹, viz., the Ikshvākus, Pañchālas, Kāśeyas, Haihayas, Kaliṅgas, Aśmakas, Kurus, Maithilas, Śūrasenas, and the Vitihotras.

The Ikshvākus were the ruling clan of Kośala, roughly corresponding to modern Oudh. They had been humbled by Ajātaśatru, the son of Bimbisāra. The history of the clan after the famous rulers Prasenajit and his son Viduratha is obscure. A passage of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* refers to the camp (*kaṭaka*) of Nanda in Ayodhyā. Apparently the king had undertaken an expedition to Kośala. An important section of the Ikshvākus seems to have been driven southwards as they are found in the third or fourth century A. D. in occupation of the lower valley of the Kṛishṇā.

The Pañchālas occupied the tract of country between the upper Ganges and the Gumti together with a part of the Central Doab. They do not appear to have come into hostile contact with the Magadhan monarchy before the rise of the Nandas, and must have been brought under control by that dynasty, as the evidence of the classical writers seems to suggest.

The Kāśeyas, or the people inhabiting the district round Benares, had come under the Magadhan sway as early as the days of Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru. It is recorded in the Purāṇas that a Śaiśunāga prince was "placed in Benares" when the founder of the line took up his residence in Girivraja, the Magadhan capital in early times. It was apparently from a descendant or successor of this prince that Nanda wrested control over the people of Kāśī.

The Haihayas are found in possession of a part of the Narmadā valley down to mediaeval times. Their earlier

1. Pargiter, *D.K.A.* p. 23.

capital was at Māhishmatī, which has been identified by Pargiter with the rocky island of Māndhātā and by others with a town named Maheśvara on the northern bank of the Narmadā within the boundaries of the Indore state. The subjugation of this region by the Nandas does not seem to be improbable in view of the Purāṇic statement about the humiliation of the rulers of the neighbouring realm of Avanti by their Śaiśunāga predecessors. But there is lack of confirmation by independent witnesses. It has however to be remembered that both Malwa and Gujarat formed integral parts of the Magadhan empire in the days of Chandragupta towards the close of the fourth century B.C., and the way may have been prepared by the Nandas.

The Kaliṅgas occupied the extensive territory stretching from the river Vaitaraṇī in Orissa to the Varāhanadī in the Vizagapatam District. Its capital in ancient times was the famous city of Dantakura or Dantapura which has been identified with the fort of Dantavakra near Chicacole in the Ganjam district, washed by the river Languliya (Lāṅgulinī). The conquest of a part of Kaliṅga by Nanda is suggested by the Hāthīgumphā record. The phraseology of the inscription hardly supports the view held by some scholars that the Nandarāja mentioned therein is a local chief. The reference is doubtless to a conqueror who established his authority over a *sanniveśa* (place) of Kaliṅga and constructed some irrigation works in the province.

The Aśmakas occupied a part of the Godāvarī valley with their capital at Potalī, Potana, or Podana. The last form of the name reminds one of Bodhan to the south of the confluence of the Mañjīrā and the Godāvarī not very far from Nizamabad in the Hyderabad state. The existence on the Godāvarī of a city called "Nau Nand Dehra" (Nander), a little to the west of the Nizamabad District, renders it probable that the dominions of the "Nine Nandas" may have embraced the classic land of the Aśmakas, though independent confirmation by contemporary or semi-contemporary writers is not available.

The Kurus, as is well known, occupied the country to the west of the Pañchālas stretching from the Ganges to the

river Sarasvatī (modern Sarsuti) which flows past the sacred site of Kurukshetra near Thanesar. The subjugation of this territory by the Nandas is not expressly mentioned by any contemporary authority, but is rendered probable by the Greek evidence in regard to "the dominions of the nation of the Praisioi and the Gandaridai" which seem to have embraced the whole tract of the Ganges.

The Maithilas were the people of Mithilā, a city famed in the epics owing to its connection with the heroine of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and her father Janaka. It has been identified with the small town of Janakpur within the Nepal border, north of where the Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur Districts meet. The greater part of Northern Bihar, over which the powerful confederation of the Vṛijis (including the Licchavis) had exercised sway, had been annexed by Ajātaśatru, and his successors are known to have graced Vaiśālī, the capital, with their presence on occasions. If the Purāṇic tradition has any value the chieftains of Mithilā must have retained a certain amount of independence in the fastnesses of the Nepalese Tarai. The periodical floods from the Gaṇḍak, the Bāgmatī and connected streams during the rainy season must have rendered this part of the country very difficult of access and it is not surprising that the forests of the Tarai should have sheltered an autonomous principality when the great city of Vaiśālī fell before the onslaught of Ajātaśatru. The Nandas attained greater success as they could operate from their base in Vaiśālī.

The Śūrasenas, the Souraseni of Megasthenes, had their capital at Mathurā on the banks of the Jumna. Their subjection to the Prasii appears very probable from the accounts of Alexander's historians.

The Vīthotras are closely associated with the Haihayas and the Avantis in Purāṇic tradition. Their sovereignty is said to have terminated before the rise of the famous line of Pradyota. If the Purāṇic statement, found in a later passage of the *Bhavishyānukīrtana*, about the contemporaneity of some of the Vīthotras with the Śaiśunāgas, has any value, the latter may have restored some scion of the old line when they took away the glory (*yaśaḥ kṛtsnam*) of the Pradyotas.

As already stated, the undoubted control that Chandragupta Māurya exercised over Western India including the Girnar region makes it highly probable that the way had been left clear by his Nanda predecessors. Jain writers expressly mention the Nandas among the successors of Pālaka, the son of Pradyota of Avanti.

Much of the information given above relating to the conquests of the first Nanda is derived from late works. But the evidence of Greek writers, taken together with the testimony of the Hāthigumphā epigraph leaves no room for doubt that the dynasty that ruled over the eastern nations of India in the days of Alexander exercised sway over practically the whole of the Gangetic basin together with some portion, if not the whole, of Kalinga. Some ingenuity has been shown by certain writers in drawing a distinction between Pūrva Nandas (earlier Nandas) and Nava Nandas (new or later Nandas) and identifying a prince of the former group with the Nandarāja of Khāavela's inscription. But the theory rests on an unjustifiable interpretation of the expression *pūrva Nanda* used by Kshemendra and other epitomisers and redactors of the *Bṛihakathā*. The Purāṇic as well as the Ceylonese tradition knows of the existence of only one Nanda line and all writers including those belonging to Jaina persuasion take the word *Nava* in the expression *Nava Nanda* to mean *nine* and not *new*. Pūrva-Nanda is the designation of a single king and not of a dynasty and he is distinguished not from the Nava Nandas but from a pseudo-Nanda (Yogananda), the reanimated corpse of king Nanda.

Several Mysore inscriptions state that Kuntala, a territory which included the southern part of the Bombay Presidency and the contiguous portions of Hyderabad state and the state of Mysore, was ruled by the Nandas. But these are of comparatively modern date (c. A. D. 1200), and too much cannot be built upon their statement. It has however to be admitted that no satisfactory account is yet available of the expansion of the Magadhan empire beyond the Kṛishṇā and the Tuṅgabhadrā which must have taken place before the promulgation of the Aśokan inscriptions of the Kurnool and Chitaldroog districts dated in the third century B. C.

Administration

We have very little information as to the way in which the vast dominions of the Nandas were administered. If tradition is to be believed the founder of the line clearly aimed at the establishment of a unitary state. The reference to the extermination of all the Kshatriyas, coupled with the use of the terms *ekarāj* and *ekachchhatra* can have no other meaning. Greek writers, however, make separate mention of the Prasii and the Gangaridae, though hinting at their subjection to a common sovereign, and Arrian notices the existence beyond the Beas of "an excellent system of internal government under which the multitude was governed by the aristocracy, who exercised their authority with justice and moderation". The aristocratic government, to which the classical writer refers, cannot fail to remind one of the *sanghas* of the Kurus, the Pañchālas and others, mentioned by the *Kauṭliya Arthaśāstra*, who bore the title of *rājā* (*rājaśabdopajīvinah*). The flourishing condition of the areas in question where "the inhabitants were good agriculturists", the land exceedingly fertile and the internal government excellent, is in striking contrast with conditions prevailing in the home provinces of the Prasian (Magadhan) monarchy where "the king was detested and held cheap by his subjects". It appears from the evidence that is available to us that Nandas allowed a considerable amount of autonomy to the people in the outlying parts of their empire, e. g., the Gangetic delta and the territories lying beyond Oudh. But the home provinces embracing the ancient *janapadas* of Magadha (South Bihār), Vṛjji (North Bihār), Kāśi (Benares), Kośala (Oudh) etc. were treated in the same way as the sultans of Delhi dealt with the metropolitan province and the river country of the Doab. The presence of the king not only in Pāṭaliputra, the capital of Magadha, but also in Viśālā or Vaiśālī, the capital of the Vṛjji country in North Bihār, is vouched for by tradition, and we have also an interesting reference to an encampment at Ayodhyā. The strong position held by the Nandas in the heart of their dominions as contrasted with their comparative weakness in the frontier regions is the theme of certain interesting anecdotes that the Buddhist

commentator on the Great Chronicle of Ceylon, and other late writers tell of Chandragupta's ambitious adventure on the threshold of his career. The stories no doubt belong to the domain of folklore and certain motifs have a surprising resemblance with the Alfred saga. But the central idea may have been based on genuine tradition. •

Greek observers of the fourth century B. C. and the epitomisers of a later age allude to a system of provincial government under officials styled nomarchs and hyparchs. A nomarch is a local ruler or governor of a nome or district. The word hyparch is sometimes used to denote a satrap. But the functionary in question is at times spoken of as a subordinate of a satrap. Though the officials are mentioned chiefly in connection with the Punjab in the days of Alexander and the Magadhan empire in the Maurya period, it is permissible to conjecture that the provincial system under the Nandas, specially in the districts under their undisputed sway, was not very different. In the third century B. C. we hear of administrative charges called *āhāra*, *vishaya*, *janapada* etc. under functionaries styled *mahāmātras*, *rājūkas*, *prādeśikas* and *rāshṭriyas* who seem to answer to the nomarchs and hyparchs mentioned by the Greeks.

The lowest administrative unit was the village. In the *Praśna Upanishad*, a later Vedic text, we hear of *adhikṛitas* appointed for *grāmas* or villages by the *samrāt* or emperor. *Grāmikas* or village headmen find mention in the early Pali Canon who possibly correspond to these *adhikṛitas*. In the early days of the Magadhan monarchy the king appears to have kept himself in close touch with these village functionaries. We hear of a big assembly of thousands of *grāmikas* held by Bimbisāra. There is no evidence that the Nandas followed this example and the detestation of the people, to which classical writers bear witness, ill accords with any close touch with life in the rural areas. Such a contact was only reestablished when Aśoka in the third century B. C. undertook pious tours even to villages in outlying areas in pursuance of his policy of *dharmānuśasti*.

According to certain manuscripts of the *Vāyu Purāna*, which is one of the oldest works of this class and is referred

to by Bāṇa in the seventh century A.D., the first Nanda ruled for twenty-eight years, and was followed by his sons who ruled for twelve years. Tāranātha, too, assigns a period of twenty-nine years to Nanda. If this chronological scheme be accepted, the first Nanda could hardly have died before c. 338 B.C. as one of his sons was reigning in 326 B.C. and the dynasty must have come to power not earlier than c. 367-66 B. C. But as stated above there is hardly any unanimity among our authorities, Purāṇic, Jain and Buddhist, regarding the reign period of Ugrasena Mahāpadma and the total duration of the rule of his family.

Later Nandas

Among the sons of the first Nanda referred to in the Purāṇas, Sahalya or Sahalin seems to have been the eldest. Most of the *Matsya* Mss. spell the name as Sukalpa. But a *Vāyu* Mss. gives the form Sahalya which, as pointed out by Barua, corresponds to Sahalin of the *Divyāvadāna*. The names of the sons of the first Nanda given in the *Mahābodhivaṃsa* are altogether different, and have not yet been confirmed from independent sources. The name of the last prince, Dhana Nanda is unknown to the classical writers who mention Agrammes or Xandrames as the name of the prince of the "barber" dynasty, who occupied the throne when Alexander was on the banks of the Beas.

Xandrames, the name mentioned by Diodorus, has been taken by some scholars to answer to the Sanskrit Chandramas, and identified with Chandragupta Maurya. But Plutarch clearly distinguishes between "Androkottos" and the king of the "Praisiai" in the days of Alexander, and his account receives confirmation from that of Justin. Xandrames or Agrammes was the son of a usurper born after his father had obtained the supreme authority among the Prasii, while Chandragupta was himself the founder of a new sovereignty, the first ruler of his dynasty. The father of Xandrames was a barber who could claim no royal ancestry. On the other hand, Indian writers are unanimous in representing Chandragupta as a scion of a race of rulers, though they differ in regard to the identity of the family and its claim to

be regarded as of pure Kshatriya extraction. Jain evidence clearly suggests that the barber usurper is identical with the *nāpita kumāra* or *nāpitasū* who founded the Nanda line.

The figures of the eight princes who succeeded the first Nanda are rather shadowy and we do not know how far the tradition recorded by late writers can be accepted as sober history. The last of them is said to have been addicted to hoarding treasure. He amassed riches to the amount of eighty *koṭis*. In a rock in the bed of the river Ganges he caused a great excavation to be made for the purpose of burying the treasures he had acquired. Levying taxes, along with other articles, even on skins, gums, trees and stones, he amassed further riches which he disposed of similarly. This account taken from the commentary on the Great Chronicle of Ceylon can claim some antiquity. Professor Nilakanta Sastri points out that a Tamil poem contains an interesting reference to the "very famous" Nandas "victorious in war, who having accumulated treasure first in beautiful Pāṭaliputra hid it in the waters of the Ganges". Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese pilgrim of the seventh century A. D. refers to "the five treasures of king Nanda's seven precious substances"¹.

The accumulation of an enormous amount of wealth, to which all our authorities bear witness, probably implies a good deal of financial extortion and it is not surprising that the Nanda contemporary of Alexander "was detested and held cheap by his subjects as he rather took after his father than conducted himself as the occupant of a throne."

The oppressed people soon found a leader. Plutarch and Justin refer to a young lad named Androkottos or Sandrocottus, doubtless identical with the famous Chandragupta, who visited Alexander in the Punjab, and showed a keen interest in the affairs of the Prasii. "Not long afterwards" he mounted the throne and "shook off from the neck" of India "the yoke of servitude" by overthrowing the existing government in India and expelling the prefects of Alexander. Indian chronicles introduce by his side another figure, a *dvijarshabha* named

Kauṭilya or Chāṇakya, whom tradition represents as an inhabitant of Taxila.

While some of the Indian writers, notably the author of the Sanskrit play entitled the *Mudrā-Rākshasa*, are chiefly concerned with the battle of intrigue conducted by Kauṭilya, the *Milinda Pañho* affords us a glimpse of the clash of arms between the contending forces of the Nandas and the Mauryas. "There was Bhaddasāla (Bhadraśāla), the soldier in the service of the royal family of the Nandas, and he waged war against king Chandagutta (Chandragupta). Now in that war, there were eighty corpse dances. For they say that when one great head holocaust has taken place by which is meant the slaughter of ten thousand elephants, and a lac of horses, and five thousand charioteers, and a hundred *koṭis* of soldiers on foot, then the headless corpses arise and dance in frenzy over the battle field". The passage contains a good deal of mythical embellishment. But we have here reminiscence of the blood bath through which Chandragupta had to wade to the throne.

The glamour of the Nandas has been dimmed by the greater splendour of the succeeding dynasty. But it is well to remember what the kings of the line bequeathed to their immediate successors and to posterity. They had, to use the words of Smith, "compelled the mutually repellent molecules of the body politic to check their gyrations and submit to the grasp of a superior controlling force". They developed a fighting machine that was used by the later rulers of Magadha with terrible effect in resisting the onslaught of foreign invaders and carrying on the policy of expansion within the borders of India that had been inaugurated by Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru.

If tradition recorded by the epitomisers of the *Bṛihat-kathā* is to be believed, Pāṭaliputra under Nanda rule became the abode (*kshetra*) of Sarasvatī as well as Lakshmī, the home of learning as well as of material prosperity. A galaxy of scholars—Varsha, Upavarsha, Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, Vararuchi, Vyāḍi—is said to have added lustre to the age. While much of the traditional account may be mere folklore unworthy of credence, we may well believe that the cultivation

of grammar received an impetus in this age. The scholia on Pāṇini, presupposed by the great commentary of Patañjali, show acquaintance with the *Yavana lipi*, and it is by no means improbable that some of the predecessors of Patañjali are to be assigned to the Nanda Age. Kings of the line are credited by certain grammarians with the establishment of a particular kind of measure (*Nandopakramāṇi mānāni*).

In social matters the rise of Nandas may be regarded as symptomatic of a surging up of the lower classes. The Purāṇic chroniclers represent the dynasty as harbingers of Śūdra rule and as irreligious (*adhārmika*). The last statement is significant in view of the traditional connection of the family with Jain ministers and patriarchs. But the evidence on the point is of a character which makes it difficult to build too much on it.

II. Regions Beyond the Magadhan Empire

No account of India in the age of the Nandas is complete without a brief notice of the vast stretches of territory within the confines of this country that lay beyond the limits of their empire. Unfortunately, the exact boundary of the Nanda dominions cannot be determined with any amount of precision with the aid of available evidence. This is particularly true of the south. In the north the inclusion of the Ganges valley within the Nanda empire is, as already noted, suggested by Greek and Purāṇic evidence. We shall perhaps not be far wrong if we regard the upper reaches of the stream, that once flowed through the Ghaggar-Hakra bed, as forming roughly the boundary line between the Magadhan empire of those days and the autonomous tribes and kingships of the Uttarāpatha. In the south Greek evidence is not of much help. Purāṇic testimony, as we have seen, hints at the incorporation into their empire by the Nandas of the principalities of all the leading Kshatriya families of the day, including in all probability those of the south. Among the latter prominent mention is made of the Haihayas, Kaliṅgas and Āsmakas.

Following this evidence, which comes from sources assignable to the commencement of the Gupta Age, we may

tentatively fix the southern boundary of the Nanda empire, or at least of the arena of its political and military activities, at the river Godāvārī. Barring some mediaeval Jaina treatises and inscriptions, of doubtful value for early times, there is hardly any evidence that the hegemony of the Nandas extended far beyond that famous river. Persian inscriptions, observations of Greek and Latin writers, supplemented by brief notices in Indian literature and epigraphs, enable us to say a few words about the two great regions of India—namely the Indus basin beyond the Ghaggar and South India beyond the Godāvārī—which, in the light of the evidence we have adduced, seem to have lain beyond the limits of the Nanda empire.

(i) *North-West India.*

A. PHYSICAL ASPECTS

Bounded on the north by the Outer Himalayas; on the west, by the eastern Hindukush, the Safed Koh, the Suleiman and the Kirthar ranges; on the south, by the surging waters of the Arabian Sea and the “immense salt-water waste of the Rann of Cutch”; and on the east by the sand-dunes of the Thar or the Great Indian Desert and the uplands and ridges of the Eastern Punjab, the extensive valley of the Indus and its feeders constituted a little world not much affected by the eddies and currents of Magadhan history before the rise of the Great Mauryas.

The country falls into three natural divisions :—(1) the mountainous regions extending from the upper reaches of the Sutlej to the basin of the Chitral and certain outlying rocky areas; (2) the flat rolling plains of the Punjab intersected by a network of rivers and brooks; and (3) the almost rainless tract of the lower Indus and its delta, an important part of which now forms the province of Sind.

The land described above presents great varieties of scenery. The eyes meet in the north the snow-clad spears and glaciers of the Himalayas and the luxuriant vegetation that clothes the submontane region. A striking contrast to this is afforded by the plains of the Indus, which look like an

“interminable waste”, overgrown with tamarisk scrubs and ultimately merging in the great desert of Rajputana, the Registan of Sind and the sandy, surf-beaten shore of the Arabian Sea. The dreary and monotonous sight is only redeemed by the green verdure of the riverine fringes and “endless expanse of waving crops of different shades of colour” that covers the country at the approach of the harvest season.

The history of the region cannot be properly understood without a reference to its river-system. The central stream of the Indus, taking its rise in the heights of the Tibetan Plateau, meanders its course through the whole length of the land. It has not only given its name to our country but, according to some Greek writers, formed sometimes its north-western boundary. Near Attock in the north-western part of the Punjab it receives the combined waters of the Kabul and its confluent, including the Swat, the Panjkora, the Kunar and the Panjshir. The rivers which contribute most to the stream of the Indus, however, lie to the east and sweep through the plains of the Punjab proper, the “Land of the Five Rivers.” The nearest among the “Five Streams” is the Jhelum or Vitastā, the Hydaspes of the Greeks. It adds to the wealth and beauty of the sunny vale of Kashmir and unites with the next stream, the Chenab, the ancient Chandrabhāgā or Asiknī, the Akesines of the Greek writers, near Jhang. The whirling of waters produced by the confluence threatened to spell disaster to a flotilla of Alexander in the fourth century B. C. The next of the sister torrents, the Rāvi, ancient Parushnī or Irāvati, the Hydraotis of the Greeks, rises in the Chamba State and falls into the united waters of the Jhelum and the Chenab. To the east of the Rāvi flows the Beas, ancient Vipāś or Vipāsā, the Hyphasis of the Greeks, which is now an affluent of the Sutlej, Śutudri, or Śatadru, the Hesi-drus or Zaradros of the Greeks. The five streams mingle their waters into the Panjnad and join the Indus above Mithankot. The mighty river then sweeps on into the Arabian sea through a number of shifting channels. Traces of old river beds are found in several directions and remains of ancient cities stud the neighbourhood.

During winter the rivers of the Punjab look comparatively small but at the approach of the hot season, when the snow of the mountains begins to melt, and particularly when the monsoons burst, the streams are lashed to fury and rush through their wide beds "in uncontrolled vagary". Large tracts of the country assume an almost oceanic character. Greek writers, as we shall see, bear ample testimony to the vagaries of these rivers and their effect on the landscape.

Although drained by a large number of rivers the soil of the Punjab is comparatively poor. The scarcity of regular rainfall and the absence of sufficient facilities for irrigation in early times added to the difficulties of extensive cultivation. The forest-clad sub-montane region, including the country round Taxila, has, however, been noted for its fertility since times long gone by. Besides agricultural products, salt added to the wealth of the Indus basin, being found embedded in rocks particularly the Salt Range, and the delta of Sind. No trace of gold mines has been found in this region, but the metal was met with in the sands of the Indus, and the Kabul rivers and the upper reaches of several other streams.

The gold-washing industry is no longer remunerative. But Herodotus informs us that in the fifth century B. C. "India", *i. e.*, the Indus valley, paid a tribute of 360 talents of gold-dust. The existence of gold and silver "mines" in the countries of Sophytes and Mousikanos and certain other regions was reported to the companions of Alexander and the Chinese pilgrims of the seventh century A. D. The forests of Gandhāra supplied teak for a Persian palace, and the country in general ivory for its adornment. Alexander, too got timber for his flotilla from the hilly region flanking the north of the Punjab.

Geographical factors exercised a controlling influence upon the history of the Land of the Five Rivers as on the rest of the country. The mountains on the west and the north that frown on the riparian plains afforded shelter to fighting clans, who turned every rocky eminence into a citadel of defence and braved the wrath of the mightiest conqueror of antiquity. The numerous streams and rivulets that intersect the plains made each *hoab* or strip of territory between two sheets of water nourish centres of autonomous

political life. The mighty Indus with its confluent streams at times promoted an opposite tendency. They served as highways for ambitious rulers who sought to compel the political molecules of the Punjab and Sind to submit to one controlling force. The story of the mineral and agricultural wealth of the country must have been carried by travellers and merchants beyond its border so as to reach the ears of the King of Kings who held his court at Susa and Ekbatana from the sixth to the fourth century B. C. The riches of India and the lack of political cohesion among the children of the soil invited invasion from outside. The existence of a centralised monarchy in Iran indicated the source from which it was to come.

B. THE ADVANCE OF PERSIA TO THE INDUS.

Some sort of military activity in India and its border-land and even conquest of a well defined territory in this direction are attributed to Cyrus (558-529 B. C.), the founder of the Persian empire, by Xenophon and other writers. But the evidence points to the inclusion within the dominions of the first Achaemenid of only the Kabul valley as far as the Indus. We learn from Pliny that Cyrus destroyed the famous city of Kāpiśī and Arrian tells us that "the district *west* of the Indus as far as the Kophen (Kabul). . submitted to the Persians and paid tribute to Cyrus". Kāpiśī, the Ka-pi-shih of Hiuen Tsang and Ki-pin (cf. Greek Kophen) of other Chinese texts stood at or near the junction of the Ghorband and the Panjshir. The eastern part of the realm of Ki-pin comprised, according to later writers, K'ien-t'o-lo or Gandhāra. Classical writers thus make it clear that the region between the Panjshir and the Indus, embracing ancient Kāpiśī or Ki-pin and Gandhāra proper (Peshawar district), was under the sway of Cyrus, a fact that accords with the appearance of Gadara or Gandhāra among the subject peoples in the earliest epigraphs of Darius (522-486 B. C.).

Another eastern people who owed allegiance to the Persians were the "Thatagus" or the Sattagydiens. They together with the Gandarians, the Dadicae and the Aparytae constituted the seventh satrapy. Herzfeld is inclined to regard

the Sattagydiens as an Indian people located in the Punjab. Rawlinson, however, thinks that they lived near the Arachosians (of Kandahar) and occupied a part of south-eastern Afghanistan. According to Sarre they are to be located in the Ghazni and Ghilzai regions. Dames placed them in the Hazara country. The exact position of the Sattagydiens still remains uncertain and the matter cannot be finally decided until the discovery of fresh evidence.

A more famous name that occurs in several inscriptions of Darius in the list of subject peoples is Hidu (Hindu), which corresponds to the "Indians" of Herodotus. The circumstances leading to their subjugation, as described by the famous Greek historian, are too well known to need recounting. We are told that "the Indians, who are more numerous than other nations with which we are acquainted, paid a tribute exceeding that of every other people, viz., 360 talents of gold-dust. This was the twentieth satrapy." Herzfeld takes Hidu to refer to Sind. The description of Herodotus that "the tribes of India are more numerous than any other nation and do not all speak the same language", taken together with the information that they paid an amount of tribute exceeding that of every other people, suggests that the twentieth province of the Achaemenid Empire could not have been confined within the narrow limits of modern Sind. If the sandy tract, which is said to have lain 'eastward of India' refers to the desert of Rajputana, then we have probably to include a considerable portion of the southern Punjab, if not the whole of the *central* as well as the lower Indus valley within the borders of the twentieth satrapy. It may no doubt be argued in this connection that certain words of Megasthenes and Arrian suggest a more restricted dominion. The former says that "the Indians had never engaged in foreign warfare, nor had ever been invaded and conquered by a foreign power, except by Hercules and Dionysus and lately by the Macedonians". Arrian also makes the statement that "according to the Indians, no one before Alexander, with the exception of Dionysus and Hercules, had invaded their country." As both these writers often take the Indus to be the western boundary of India proper, their statements may be taken to imply that

the Persian dominion in the east did not extend beyond the mighty Sindhu. But it has perhaps been rightly pointed out that "Alexander's historians may have been inclined to minimise the accomplishments" of the Persians "in order to bring into greater prominence the achievements of the famous Greek invader." In any case we should give more weight to the contemporary testimony of Herodotus than to the observations of Megasthenes and Arrian who wrote in much later ages.

The empire which Darius ruled with wisdom and vigour did not long survive his death. Xerxes, who succeeded his father in 486 B. C. and reigned till 465 B. C., had to face a sea of troubles. Rebellions broke out on all sides. We learn from a Persepolis inscription, usually assigned to the period between 486-480 B. C., that he destroyed the temple of the *daiwas*. This, in all likelihood, has reference to India. It is, however, difficult to determine whether the Achaemenian ruler proclaimed a *jihad* in honour of Ahuramazda or was faced with a rebellion of the far-eastern province of his empire, the land of the Deva-worshippers. That the monarch succeeded in retaining some hold over the Indian provinces is amply attested by the fact that the people of Gandhāra as well as the Indians figured in the vast host that he led against Hellas in 480 B. C.

The discomfiture that the fleet and army of Persia suffered in the fight against the Greeks at Salamis and Plataea, Mycale and Eurymedon, clearly indicated that her days of conquest and ascendancy were over. The weak and incapable successors of Xerxes found more delight in the boudoirs of the harem than on fields of battle. The direction of state affairs gradually passed into the hands of ambitious women or all-powerful officials. Murder of princes, rebellions of satraps and popular outbreaks lined the path of national decline. But genius for intrigue and possession of gold enabled the agents of a corrupt and effete system to continue for sometime to wield an influence which the valour and enterprise of their antagonists failed effectively to eradicate.

The Achaemenians succeeded in retaining some control or influence over the tribes of the Indian borderland till 330

B. C. when their hegemony was finally extinguished by Alexander. Strabo informs us, on the authority of Eratosthenes, that "the Indus was the boundary between India and Arianā, which latter was situated next to India to the west and was in possession of the Persians at that time" (*i. e.* when Alexander invaded India).

Indian contingents fought side by side with the Persians against the Hellenic host at Guagamela. Arrian refers to *three* distinct groups of Indians who responded to the trumpet call of Darius III Codomanus (335-330 B. C.). The Indians who were neighbours of the Bactrians (of the Balkh region), possibly the inhabitants of Kāpiśī-Gandhāra, were arrayed with the Bactrians themselves and the Sogdianians (of the Samarkand territory) under the command of Bessus, the satrap of Bactria. A second group of Indians styled the "Indian hillmen" or "mountaineer Indians", possibly the Sattagydiāns or people of the principality of Sambos in Sind, were placed with the Arachosians (of the Kandahar area) under Bersaentes, Satrap of Arachosia. Besides these, we have pointed reference to a third group, viz. Indians on *this* side of the Indus, apparently those of the twentieth satrapy, who came to the help of the Persian king with a comparatively small force of fifteen elephants.

In the huge Persian army that Darius pitched against Alexander the Indians occupied the centre where the great king himself took up his position. They obviously enjoyed, in a special measure, the confidence of the sovereign and had the honour of protecting his person with his kinsmen, "the Persians whose spears were fitted with golden apples, the 'transplanted' Carians and the Mardian bowmen." Nor did they belie the trust reposed in them. When the attack began and the great king himself took to flight some of the Indians, together with the Persian cavalry, fell upon the enemy with great impetuosity and threatened one contingent (the army of Parmenio) with total annihilation. The timely help of Alexander saved the situation.

It is interesting to note that two important sections of Indians who joined the army of Darius III fought under the banner of the satraps of Bactriā and Arachosia. This possibly

implies that their territories were committed to the charge of those two satrapies. The amalgamation of two, or even three, provinces is a feature of the administrative history of the later Achaemenids. Like the *Dandopanatasāmantas*, mentioned in *Kautilīyan Arthasāstra*, Indian lieges furnished contingents to the paramount power in the hour of its need. The great provincial satraps had the assistance of district officials or local potentates of the rank of *nomarch* and *hyparch*. A number of these functionaries are mentioned as ruling in the Kabul and Indus valleys on the eve of the Macedonian invasion of 326 B. C. Alexander did not meet with any Persian satrap after he crossed the Indus. But *hyparchs* and *nomarchs* were to be found as far as the Salt range. Some of the chiefs assumed the full insignia of sovereignty and even styled themselves *Basileus* or king. The hold of the Persian king and satraps had by this time grown very weak. Each petty principality or chiefship cherished "with a passionate tenacity its individual life and political ambition, making wars and alliances as the interest of the moment might dictate."

C SUCCESSORS OF THE ACHAEMENIDS

The little states in North-western India and the borderland that rose on the ruins of the Persian Empire may be grouped under three heads : (a) kingships, mainly of a tribal character, in the region between the Kunar and the Ravi, with a solitary hill-state apparently under oligarchical rule; (b) the autonomous tribes east of the Ravi and south of the junction of the Jhelum and the Chenab; and (c) monarchies and one state under 'diarchy' in the lower Indus valley below Mithankot, in parts of which Brāhmaṇas seem to have exercised considerable political influence.

The first group begins with the principalities in the hill country drained by the northern affluents of the Kabul river comprising the valleys of the Kunar, the Panjkora and the Swat, occupied by the Aspasiens, the Gaureans and the Assakenians respectively. The name Aspasian is derived from the Iranian '*Aspa*', horse, corresponding to the Sanskrit '*Aśva*' or '*Aśvaka*'. They were thus identical with, or kindreds of, the Assakenians or Aśvakas. The ruler of the Aspasiens is

styled a *hyparch*. The chief wealth of the people seems to have consisted in cattle, 230,000 of which were captured by Alexander.

The territory occupied by the Assakenians lay in the Swat valley and was known in the Gupta Age as Suvāstu and Udyāna. The royal seat of the country was Massaga, a great city well fortified both by nature and art. It was surrounded by a wall of 35 stadia in circumference, built of sun-baked brick on a foundation of stone work. Towers and engines had to be employed by Alexander to bring about its fall. The Assakenian king had a powerful army of 20,000 cavalry, more than 30,000 infantry and 30 elephants. He was probably in alliance with the king of Abhisāra, as his brother, when attacked by Alexander, took shelter with the latter.

Somewhere in the rugged country to the west of the Indus stood the small hill-state Nysa "at the foot of Mt. Meros." Holdich locates it on the lower spurs and valleys of Kohi-Mor in the Swat country. The Nysaeans are alleged to have been Greek colonists, descendants of men who came to India with Dionysus. The presence of a Yona or Greek *janapada* on the Indian borderland in the days of the Buddha is vouched for by the *Majjhima-nikāya*. The people of Nysa lived under an aristocratic government and their laws received the approbation of Alexander. The members of the Governing Body numbered 300. Akuphis held the office of the President at the time of the Macedonian invasion.

The old territory of Gandhāra was in the latter part of the fourth century B. C. divided between two *hyparchs* viz., those of Pūshkalāvati and Takshasilā or Taxila. Pūshkalāvati, or Peuc laotis of the Greeks, lay to the west of the Indus in the modern district of Peshawar. Taxila stood in the eastern part of ancient Gandhāra. The oldest city of that name is probably represented by the present Bhir mound near Saraikala, 20 miles north-west of Rawalpindi. It was a great and prosperous city in those days, "the largest of all which lay between the river Indus and Hydaspes (Jhelum)." Plutarch, giving an exaggerated estimate of the size of the realm of "Taxiles", says that it was "as large as Egypt, with good pasturage, too, and in the highest degree productive of beautiful fruits". Strabo

refers to its "most excellent laws" and speaks of it as spacious and very fertile, adding that "some say that this is larger than Aegypt." The wealth of the country is testified to by the fact that one of its chiefs presented to Alexander 200 silver talents, 3,000 cattle for sacrificial offering, over 10,000 sheep and 30 elephants. The succeeding ruler gave Alexander and his friends golden crowns and 80 talents of coined silver. The attitude of Taxila towards its neighbours throws welcome light on interstate and inter-tribal relations in the later half of the fourth century B. C. It entertained no friendly feelings towards Pūshkalāvati and was actually at war with "Abisares" (the Abhisāra chief) and "Porus" (the Paurava) both of whom held sway beyond the river Jhelum. It is difficult to determine the exact political status of the ruler of Taxila at the time of Alexander's invasion. Arrian styles him a *hyparch* but Strabo calls him a *basileus*. It is possible that he was one of the subordinate governors or vassal chiefs of the Persian empire and took advantage of the collapse of Achaemenian authority to declare his independence. The cases of several *nawabs* of the eighteenth century furnish us with close parallels

"The hilly region above the Taxila country was occupied by Arsakes or the chief of Uraśā (Hazara district) and Abisares or Prince of Abhisāra (Punch and Nowshera districts)." It is interesting to note that like many of his brother chieftains on the borderland Arsakes is described as a *hyparch*.

The ruler of Abhisāra, on the other hand, is styled by Arrian as a *Basileus* or king. He was a very powerful prince and a man of shrewd political sense. He seems to have been a member of a powerful combination of chiefs consisting of Porus, Arsakes and possibly Assakenus. He was no friend of the king of Taxila and is known to have led an expedition against the Cathaeans and other self-governing tribes of the Punjab in alliance with Porus. He sensed the danger of the Macedonian invasion and tried to stop the invader at the gate of India. Thus he sent help to the frontier city of Ora and gave shelter to the brother of Assakenus. When Alexander actually arrived at Taxila he sent envoys offering his submission and yet before the battle of the Hydaspes (Jhelum) he made preparations for joining his forces with Porus.

To the south-east of Taxila between the Jhelum and the Ravi lay the twin territories of the Purus or Pauravas, a people already famous in the *Rig Veda*. The realm of the elder of the two chieftains roughly corresponded to parts of the modern districts of Gujarat and Shahpur. It was an extensive and fertile region containing three hundred cities. The second Paurava or Porus, styled a *hyparch* by Arrian, governed a principality between the Chenab and the Rāvi. A man of undaunted courage, brave as a lion, Porus the Elder towered like a triton among minnows. The king of Taxila on the west and his own nephew or cousin, styled the Younger Porus, on the east were both afraid of him. The Cathaeans and other self-governing tribes also had a wholesome respect for his prowess. Diodorus informs us that he was in alliance with Embisaros (Abisares or king of Abhisāra) and in the battle of the Hydaspes he received help from Spitaces, a *nomarch* who possibly owed him allegiance. The army he marshalled against Alexander numbered more than 50,000 foot, about 3,000 horses and above 1,000 chariots and 130 elephants.

Not far from the domains of the Pauravas stretched the principality of the *nomarch* Sophytes or Saubhuti. It included a mountain composed of fossil salt sufficient for the whole of India; Saubhuti is therefore sometimes represented as the "lord of the fastness of the Salt Range" stretching from the Indus to the Jhelum. Classical writers, however, agree in placing his territory to the *east* of the Jhelum. We have some coins of this potentate bearing on the obverse the royal head and on the reverse the figure of a cock. The issue of coins, like the assumption of the title of *Basileus* by the chief of Taxila, may point to the assumption of the rank of an independent king. Both Curtius and Diodorus agree that the people of the kingdom of Saubhuti lived under good laws and customs and beauty was held by them in the highest estimation. "Officers were appointed to discriminate between children with deformed or defective limbs and those with perfect and healthy constitutions and features. The former were put to death, and the latter were reared, not according to the will of the parents but according to the wishes of the state. In contracting marriages they did not seek an alliance with high birth nor

did they care whether a bride had dowry or a handsome fortune, but made their choice by the looks and other advantages of the outward person. The inhabitants were therefore held in higher estimation than the rest of their countrymen and also excelled in wisdom.”¹

With the Pauravas and Saubhuti we take leave of the tribal chieftains, who held sway on the borderland and the western Punjab under the titles of *hyparch*, *nomarch* and, more rarely, *Basileus*. We now come to the territories of the autonomous clans. We have to mention first the Glauganikai or Glausians, whose country lay to the west of the Chenab close to the territory of the Pauravas. In their land were no less than thirty-seven cities; of these, the least populated had above five thousand inhabitants many of them had over ten thousand. There was also a large number of populous villages.² We have next to mention the Kathaioi or Cathaeans, who are placed by some on the far side of the Chenab and the Ravi. The name possibly stands for the Sanskrit *Kaṭha*. A brave and warlike race, the Cathaeans had their stronghold at Sangala, probably situated in the Gurudaspur district not far from Fathgarh, though some prefer the claims of Jandiala to the east of Amritsar, or that of Lahore itself. The people had a keen sense of beauty. Strabo, on the authority of Onesicritus, tells us that they chose the handsomest person as their king, and had customs that remind one of the realm of Saubhuti. Other observations of Onesicritus on the Cathaeans will be cited later.

Not far from the Cathaeans on the eastern side of the Ravi lived the Adraistai. Their main stronghold was Pimprama. Between the Ravi and the Beas we find mention of a chief named Phegeus or Phegelis. The name of the king probably answers to the Sanskrit *Bhagala*, known from the *Gaṇapāṭha* as a designation of a royal race of Kshatriyas.

Below the junction of the Jhelum and the Chenab, in the Shorkot region of the Jhang district lay the territory of a people, called the Siboi. They were probably identical with the

1. M'Crindle *Invasion* pp. 219, 279.

2. *Arrian* (Loeb) II 63, 65.

Śiva people mentioned in the *Rig Veda* and the Śibis of the later literature. They were dressed with skins like Herakles and had clubs for their weapon, and further branded their cattle and mules with the mark of a club.¹ The nation mustered 40,000 soldiers to oppose Alexander. This people had the Agalassoï as their neighbours. Their army too numbered 40,000, besides 3,000 horse. Curtius tells us that "three largest rivers in India washed the line of the fortifications of their stronghold. The Indus flows close up to it, and on the south the Akesines unites with the Hydaspes."²

Below the confluence of these rivers, on the confines of a waterless tract and along the Ravi and the Chenab lived the people called Malloi. Their name, as is well known, represents the Sanskrit Mālava. Closely connected with them in Sanskrit and Greek literature were the Oxydrakai or Oxydracae (variously called Sydracae, Sudracae, Syrakousai) or the Kshudrakas. Strabo informs us that they were regarded as the descendants of Dionysus, judging from the vine of their country and their bacchanalian procession. Pāṇini refers to the Mālavas as living by the profession of arms. Arrian includes them among self-governing Indians and says that they were the most numerous and the most warlike of the Indians in these parts. The evidence of Strabo seems to suggest that the Kshudrakas were ruled by petty kings (*basileus*), comparable to the *Rājās* among the Lichchavis and the Mallas of Eastern India. Arrian in one passage refers to the mayors of the cities and rulers of districts (*nomarchai*) among them, who were entrusted with full power to negotiate with foreign potentates. Before the invasion of Alexander the Mālavas and the Kshudrakas were often at war with one another. But at the approach of the common enemy they decided to join forces. According to Curtius the combined army numbered 90,000 foot, 10,000 cavalry and 900 war chariots and they placed at their head a brave warrior of the nation of the Kshudrakas. A somewhat different account is given by Diodorus who says that the two nations at first mustered a force of 80,000

foot, 10,000 horse and 700 chariots and cemented their alliance by intermarriages, each nation taking and giving in exchange 10,000 of their young women for wives; but subsequently a dispute arose among them regarding leadership and they drew off into adjoining towns. Arrian's narrative seems to imply that Alexander reached the territory of the Mālavas before any help could come to them from their neighbours.

The territory on the lower Chenab, situated between the confluence of that river with the Ravi and the junction with the Indus respectively was occupied by several autonomous tribes, such as the Abastencæ, also called Sambastai, Sabarazæ (Ambashṭhas), the Xathroi (Kshatri) and the Ossadioi (Vasāti). The Ambashṭhas find prominent mention in Sanskrit and Pāli literature, including the great epics, along with the Śibis, the Kshudrakas, the Mālavas and the Sindhavas. Curtius and Diodorus both agree that they were a powerful people with a *democratic* government. Their army consisted of 60,000 foot, 6,000 cavalry and 400 chariots in Alexander's time. The Xathroi and the Ossadioi possibly the Kshatris and Vasātis of Sanskrit texts, do not seem to, have shared the eminence of their famous neighbours.

Below the confluence of the five rivers lived the Sodrai and the Massanoi. The river Indus seems to have separated the territories of the two. The Sodrai are, in all probability, the Śūdras of the epic, a people closely associated with the Ābhiras dwelling on the Sarasvatī.

The major part of Sind from Sukkur to the delta was divided among a number of potentates of whom the most important was Mousikanos. The capital of this prince is usually placed at or near Alor. His country was reported to be the richest in India and Arrian tells us that Alexander much admired it and its capital. Strabo gives interesting information about the kingdom of Mousikanos on the authority of Onesicritus and this will be reproduced elsewhere.

From the account left by Arrian it appears that the "Brachmans" or Brāhamaṇas exercised considerable influence in the country. They instigated a revolt against the Macedonian invader. Nearchus informs us "that the Brachamanes engage in affairs of state and attend the kings as councillors".

Not far from the territory of Mousikanos lay the principality over which Oxykanos or Portikanos held sway. Arrian calls him a *nomarch*. The inhabitants of the region are styled by Curtius Praesti, possibly the Proshthas of the epic.

In the mountainous country adjoining the kingdom of Mousikanos ruled Sambos, called Sabus by Strabo and Sabbas by Plutarch. His capital was Sindimana or Sindomana, which has been identified, with little plausibility, with Sehwan, a city on the Indus. Arrian informs us that Sambos and Mousikanos were at enmity with one another. Sambos was appointed satrap of the Indian hillmen by Alexander; but if Plutarch is to be believed he rose in rebellion at the instance of the *gymnosophists*. This hints at the fact that "naked philosophers" who were either Brāhmaṇas or followers of the Jina had considerable political influence in the country of Sambos. Conditions therefore were not unlike those in the realm of Mousikanos. Diodorus makes explicit mention of a nation and country of the Brāhamaṇas in the neighbourhood of the Sindian chiefships. He also places at the extremity of the "country of the Brāhmaṇas" a city, called Harmatelia, which, as the evidence of Justin suggests, was ruled by a chief named Ambigerus.

In the delta of the Indus lay the territory of Patalene, referred as Pottala and identified with Tauala of Diodorus. The capital probably stood near the site of Bahmanabad. Diodorus tells us Tauala had a political constitution like that of Sparta. The army was commanded by two kings belonging to separate families, while a Council of Elders directed the affairs of the state with supreme authority. One of the kings in the time of Alexander is styled by Curtius Moeres, a name that sounds like Moriya or Maurya of Indian records.

To sum up, North-West India presented on the whole a picture of disunion when the Nandas held sway in the Ganges valley. Constant references to *hyparchs* and *nomarchs*, however, indicate that, as in the eighteenth century, agents of a defunct empire were, with few exceptions, still content with the subordinate titles they had in the palmy days of the rule of their former imperial masters. The time was ripe for interference from powers that dominated the tableland

of Iran on the west and the valley of the Ganges in the east.

2. The Far South

In comparison with the North-West our information regarding the Far South of India beyond the river Godāvarī in the age of the Nandas is extremely meagre. The region falls into three well-marked natural divisions: (1) The high land enclosed between the Western and the Eastern Ghats, which has its 'orographical apex' at the Nilgiri where the great mountain systems of the south merge into one another; (2) a narrow strip of territory on its west extending as far as the shores of the sea, intersected by numerous coves and creeks, but "unbroken by the passage of any considerable river"; and (3) the broader eastern sea-board embracing the fertile deltas of the Godāvarī, the Kṛishṇā and the Kāverī as well as the "open treeless plains" of Madura and Tinnevely.

The two low-lying strips of territory overlooking the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal respectively are "filled with luxuriant vegetation, nourished by sea-borne mists and vapours", bedecked with groves of palm and cocoanut and adorned in places by a number of backwaters, lagoons or lakes. They afford a most picturesque sight to the traveller. The wide expanse of the table land of the interior, "in some parts mountainous and wooded, in others flat and undulating, with stretches of rich crop-growing fields as well as sterile soil", also presents a beautiful and diversified scenery. The south became justly famous for its natural wealth. The maritime belts are in many places exceedingly fertile and produced abundant crops of cereals. Ancient ports are found scattered all along the coast-line through which a brisk trade was carried on with the countries of the west and the east from bygone times. Among the chief articles of commerce pepper, beryl and pearls were highly prized in Europe. The last-mentioned articles find prominent mention in the works of the Classical authors since the days of Megasthenes. Kauṭilya, too, refers to pearl called Tāmraparṇika, "that which is produced in Tāmraparṇi," besides articles produced in Pandya-kapāṭa and the cotton fabrics of Madura.

It is the wealth of the Far South, rather than the annals of its people, their manners and customs, religion and philosophy, that interested the earliest foreign observers. The contemporaries and immediate successors of Alexander seem to have had some vague knowledge of the south. A place called Keras is mentioned by Aristotle. But its identification with Kerala or Chera is not beyond doubt. Onesicritus, however, gives a description of the island of Taprobane (Tāmraparṇī or Ceylon). Eratosthenes in his description of India in the days of Alexander informs us that the most southerly part of India was occupied by the lands of Coniaci and Taprobane was seven days' sail from this place. He gathered the information that the most southerly capes of India rose opposite to the region of Meroe, from treatises written by men who had been to that region. Nearchus speaks of the setting of the Bears and if Megasthenes is to be believed this was a phenomenon observed in the southern parts of India. Aristobulus shows acquaintance with the products of "the southern land of India, (which) like Arabia and Aethiopia bears cinnamon, nard and other aromatic products." Strabo speaks of the people of the south as being like the Aethiopians in colour, but he does not specify his authority. Megasthenes speaks, in one of his doubtful fragments, of the Andrae (Andhras) who "possessed numerous villages, thirty towns defended by walls and towers, and supplied their king with an army of 100,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 1,000 elephants." The tribe is referred to in certain *Brāhmaṇa* texts and is found in historical times in the region watered by the lower courses of the Godāvāri and the Kṛishṇā. Mention is also made of a tribe called the "Modubae" who are placed beyond the "Modogalingae". They are apparently identical with the Mutibas, a Dasyu tribe associated by the *Brāhmaṇa* texts, referred to above, with the Andhras.

The extreme south of India to which the designation Tamilakam or Draviḍa (Damirike of Greek writers of the earliest centuries A. D.) was applied in post-vedic times consisted of four independent principalities in the third century B. C. These were the Cholas, the Pāṇḍyas, Keralaputra and Satiyaputra. Of these Satiyaputra does not seem to have

been mentioned by any author historically or traditionally assignable to the Nanda period. We shall therefore content ourselves with a brief notice of the three remaining regions.

The Chola country proper comprised the districts of Trichinopoly and Tanjore and was watered by the river Kāverī. The fame of the country in the age of the Nandas is vouched for by the celebrated grammarian Kātyāyana.

The Pāṇḍya country is represented by the modern districts of Madura, Ramnad and Tinnevely together with the southern part of the Travancore state. It was drained by the rivers Kṛitamālā or the Vaigai and the Tāmraparṇī. Like the Cholas, the Pāṇḍyas too are mentioned by Kātyāyana. He derives the name of the country from the famous Pāṇḍu. Megasthenes also refers to the Pāṇḍaian (Pāṇḍya) country and repeats some confused traditions regarding the connection of the land with the North, with Śūrasena, Mathurā and Herakles. The Pāṇḍyan people were distributed in 365 villagee and on every day of the year a village brought the tribute to the treasury, "so that the queen (represented by the Classical writers as the daughter of Herakles) might always have the assistance of those men whose turn it was to pay the tribute in coercing those who for the time being were defaulters in their payments."¹ It is interesting to note that the chief ornaments of the Pāṇḍyas were made of sea-pearl. Arrian tells us that the Pāṇḍya queen received from her father 500 elephants, 4,000 horses and 130,000 cavalry. Pliny tells us that her descendants ruled over 3,000 cities and commanded an army of 150,000 foot and 500 elephants. According to the same authority Pāṇḍya 'is the only race in India ruled by women.' Later writers, however, refer to more than one such territory.

If the *Mahāvamsa* is to be believed the Pāṇḍya kingdom and its capital, were in existence even in the time of Vijaya-simha, the traditional conquerer of Ceylon, who is represented as a contemporary of Buddha. In this region we should perhaps place the land of the Coniaci, whose name may represent Kumārikā of Indian writers. The identification with Dhanushkoṭi is less plausible.

1. M'Crindle, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 159.

Kerala, the third among the classic realms of the Far South, corresponds roughly to south Malabar and seems to have extended down to central Travancore. As already stated, its identification with *Keras* of Aristotle is problematical.

Kerala may have embraced within its boundaries a district styled *Mūshika*. In a passage of Strabo, Onesicritus is said to have represented the "country of Mousikanos" as the *most southerly* part of India. The territory of the famous Mousikanos, the contemporary of Alexander, was, as is well known, located in the lower Indus valley. But it is not improbable that Onesicritus had heard also of the *Mūshikas* in the Far South and corrupted the name into Mousikanos. It may be pointed out in this connection that both Baharampur in the Murshidabad District of Bengal and Brahmapur in Ganjām have been corrupted into Berhampur by British officials.

CHAPTER II

ALEXANDER'S CAMPAIGNS IN INDIA

After Alexander's conquest of Bactria and Sogdiana, the Indian satrapy was the only province of the Persian empire into which he had not carried his arms. Of this province he must have gained some valuable knowledge from Sisikottos (Śasi Gupta), the Indian mercenary leader who transferred his services from Bactria to her conqueror. Alexander also received an embassy in Sogdiana from Omphis (Āmbhi) of Takshaśilā (Taxila) which offered him the alliance of the Indian prince and sought the foreigner's aid against his powerful neighbour Porus, the first recorded instance of an Indian seeking foreign aid against fellow Indians.

At the end of the spring of 326 B. C., Alexander started on his Indian expedition leaving Amyntas behind with 3,500 horse and 10,000 foot to hold the land of the Bactrians. He crossed the Central Hindu Kush in ten days following the main road from Balkh to Kabul, and reached the rich and beautiful valley of Koh-i-Daman, where he had already founded an Alexandria, which he now strengthened with fresh recruits from the neighbourhood and from among his war-worn soldiers. He placed Nicanor in charge of the city, and appointed Tyriespes satrap of the area, dispositions intended, as was usual with Alexander, to secure his rear before advancing further.

Alexander then proceeded to Nikaia (Greek for 'city of victory'), a place that lay most likely on his route to the river Kābul. Here he offered a sacrifice to the goddess Athena, and met an Indian embassy headed by the king of Takshaśilā which 'brought him such presents as are most esteemed by the Indians' and gave him also all the elephants they had with them, twenty-five in number.

After leaving Nikaia and at some distance from the city on the way to the Kabul river, Alexander divided his army, and sent one part of it under Hephaestion and Perdikkas to the

CHAPTER III

INDIA IN EARLY GREEK AND LATIN LITERATURE

1. *Introductory*

India and Greece met in the Persian empire some two centuries before the time of Alexander. Even earlier, Indian ideas seem to have travelled far into the West and influenced Pythagoras and his followers; true, we cannot now say by what channel this contact was made, but the similarities between Pythagorean thought and that of the Upanishads, and between the organisation and ceremonial of the Pythagorean fraternity and the ancient ascetic orders of India are too close to be treated as chance coincidences or the results of parallel developments. Aristoxenus (*c.* 330 B. C.), a Greek writer on harmonics and a pupil of Socrates, is known to have mentioned the visit of an Indian philosopher to Athens and the meeting between him and Socrates at which the scope of philosophy was discussed; and the celebrated simile of the rope and the snake, which is found in Sextus Empiricus and nowhere else in Greek or Latin literature, has been traced to Pyrrho, the founder of the Sceptic system, who accompanied Alexander to India.¹

The accounts of any country and its people by foreign observers are of great interest to the historian of the country; for they enable him to know what impression the country made upon the minds of such observers and to estimate with greater confidence the part played by it in the general history of the world. And where, as in the case of ancient India, the native sources of history fail him partly or altogether at some points, the writings of foreigners gain great value in his eyes. Yet it is easy

1. Richard Garbe, *The Philosophy of Ancient India*, pp. 39—46, seems to me to give a much more balanced criticism of earlier writers, particularly of Leopold von Schroeder, than A. B. Keith, Pythagoras and the Doctrine of Transmigration, *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 569—606. See also Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, pp. 140—42. Like Garbe, I would restrict the scope of my observations to Pythagoras and his school. For Aristoxenus cited by Eusebius, see Rawlinson, India and Greece in *Ind. Art and Letters*, X (1936), pp. 57—8. For Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus, S. J. Warren, 'Het Slangen Truw voorbeeld bij Sextus Empiricus en in Indie', *Versl. en Med. der kon. Akad. van Wetenschappen, Amsterdam*, IV, ix, pp. 230—244.

to exaggerate the value of the Greek writings on India. The Greek writers did evince a commendable interest in observing and recording facts; but they were also credulous purveyors of all the fable and gossip that came their way. The few who wrote before the invasion of Alexander did so mostly from hearsay and had little direct knowledge of India. The scientists and men of action who accompanied Alexander must have found most of their time taken up with planning, marching and fighting in a hostile and unknown country, and the wonder is that they succeeded in doing what they did to make India known to their countrymen; and the lands they traversed were but the fringe of Hindusthan far from the genuine centres of Hindu culture in the heart of the country. The ambassadors of the Hellenistic kings who came after Alexander, in particular Megasthenes, had better opportunities of studying the country and its people as their missions took them into their midst. But being ignorant of the language of the people, they must have depended on interpreters of sorts and experienced considerable difficulty in comprehending correctly what they saw and heard. The Chinese pilgrims of a later age who had command of the Sanskrit idiom were much better placed in this respect; but their interests were not so wide. Lastly, with very few exceptions, Herodotus being the most notable of them, all the original writings have perished, and we now depend on excerpts preserved by later writers and compilers, who, in turn, had access only at second hand to the matter they quoted. We lack the means of forming an independent integral judgment of most of our ultimate authorities. Nevertheless it is useful to study these excerpts with care, for much can be learnt thus of the geography, physical and human, of India as it was understood by contemporary Greek writers, of its fauna and flora, of its society, religious condition, and economic activity.

2. *Scylax*

The first Greek to write a book on India was the sea-captain Scylax of Caryanda whom Darius sent out *c.* 509 B.C. on a voyage of exploration to find out where the Indus emptied itself into the sea. He is said to have started from the city of

Kaspatyrus in the Paktyikan district, sailed down the stream to the sea, and after a voyage of thirty months, reached the place whence the Egyptian king Necho sent the Phoenicians to sail round Libya. 'After this voyage was completed', says Herodotus, 'Darius conquered the Indians, and made use of the sea in those parts'. Scylax's voyage might have taken him through the lower Kabul valley, parts of Kashmir and the bulk of the Indus country. We know little of Scylax's book; we do not hear of it as being a guide to Alexander in his voyage. It is certain however that Scylax started some of the fables about Indian peoples which coloured Greek traditional beliefs about India for many centuries; there is a reference in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, to 'men that are shadow-footed or have long heads' and 'the other poetical fancies which the treatise of Scylax recounts' about peoples who 'didn't live anywhere on the earth, and least of all in India.' Aristotle cites Scylax's statement that in India kings had a marked superiority over those they governed.¹

The antiquarian and geographer, Hecataeus of Miletus (B. C. 549-486)², might have used Scylax; he opens one of his works, *Inquiries*, with the admirable statement: 'What I write here is what I consider true; for the tales of the Greeks appear to me to be many and ridiculous.' From his other work, the *Geography*, some Indian names have survived: they are those of the river Indus; of two cities, Kaspapyros, a city of Gāndhāra, Multan according to another view, probably the same as Herodotus' Kaspatyrus, and Argante, a city in the valley of the Indus; and of some peoples, viz., the Opiari, the Kalatiai, the Sciapodes (the shadow-footed people of Scylax) and perhaps also the Pygmies. Beyond the Indus was a sandy waste, a statement in which Hecataeus is followed by Herodotus, their knowledge of India being mostly limited to the Persian part of it.

1. The chief reference to Scylax is Herodotus, IV 44. See Philostratus, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, III, 47 and Aristotle, *Politics*, VII, 14, 3.

2. For Hecataeus of Miletus see *Cambridge Ancient History*. IV, pp. 518-19; Lassen, *Ind. Alt.*, ii, pp. 635-36. Foucher, *Ancient Multan*, in *Woolner Commemoration volume* (Lahore 1940) pp. 89-105 argues that Kaspapyros must be identified with Multan.

3. *Herodotus*

* The references to India and Indians in Herodotus (B. C. 484-425)¹ place them in a clear light, and the monstrous races that formed the stock in trade of Greek writers on India before and after him do not make their appearance in his pages. India is to him the furthest region of the inhabited world towards the east, and Indians dwell nearest the rising of the sun. Of the Indians within the empire of Darius he observed that they were more numerous than any other nation known to him, and paid a tribute exceeding that of every other people, three hundred and sixty talents of gold-dust. But he knows that there were many other tribes of Indians, all of them dark-skinned, living a long way from Persia towards the south over whom King Darius had no authority. There were many tribes among Indians and they did not all speak the same language. Some were nomads, others not. Among the nomads were the Padaeans, who lived on raw flesh, including that of sick or old members of the tribe, who were offered in sacrifice to their gods—a practice attested by modern observers to have obtained till recently among some savage hill tribes. The same custom prevailed among the Kallatai within the Persian empire. There was another tribe of marsh-dwellers who ate raw fish and wore garments of sedge. Herodotus' knowledge of the people across the Persian border was by no means confined to savages. 'There is another set of Indians whose customs are very different. They refuse to put any living animal to death, they sow no corn, and have no dwelling houses. Vegetables are their only food. There is a plant which grows wild in their country, bearing seed, about the size of millet seed, in a calyx: their wont is to gather this seed and having boiled it, calyx and all, to use it for food. If one of them is attacked with sickness, he goes forth into the wilderness, and lies down to die; no one has the least concern either for the sick or for the dead.' This is a very good account of the life of the forest-dwelling sages of India who used wild rice (*nivāra*) for their staple food.

1. Herodotus, III, 38, 94, 98—106: VII, 65, 86: McCrindle, *Anc. Ind.* Sec. 1. The citations in the text are from Rawlinson's version, *Everyman's Library* Edn. Strabo, XV, 1, 56 (p. 59) for Megasthenes on cannibalism.

Within the Persian empire, the Indian tribes of Paktiyika (Pashtu country), who dwelt northward of all the rest of the Indians and resembled the Bactrians in their mode of life, were the most warlike, and from among them were selected the men who were sent to procure gold from the sandy-desert. Herodotus gives a full account of gold-digging ants of the size of dogs, which threw up mounds of the gold-dust that was collected and brought away by the Indians in camel loads during the hottest part of the day when the ants hid themselves to escape the heat; this story in some form became a permanent feature of all later Greek accounts of India; Nearchus averred that he saw the skins of these ants and that these resembled the skins of leopards;¹ Megasthenes connects the Dardai (Skt. Daradas, mod. Dards) with the gathering of ant-gold, and states that they diverted the attention of the ants by depositing the flesh of wild beasts in different places before beginning to remove the gold. Some ingenious scholars explain away the ants of the size of dogs by supposing that the ants are derived from the name of gold *pīpīlikā*, and that the native miners did keep formidable dogs which chased away the people who came to take the gold; such explanations raise more questions than they answer and are of no value. Herodotus adds that India got a small part of its gold supply from mining and both he and Megasthenes mention that some of it came from river beds.²

Herodotus notes that the beasts and birds of India were much bigger than those found elsewhere, except the horses, which were surpassed by the Median breed. He tells us of a

1. Strabo, XV, 44, in McCrindle, *Anc. Ind.*, p 51 where he gives references to several ancient authors mentioning the gold-digging ants: also his *Meg. and Arrian*, pp. 94—7. The *Mahābhārata*, (Cal. ed.), VII, 1860 also mentions them.

*tadvai pīpīlikam nāma uddhritam yat-pīpīlikaih
jūlarūpaṁ droṇa-meyam ahārshuh puñjaśo nṛpāh*

The Kumbakonam edition (II, 78, 80) reads wrongly *kuñjaśo* for *puñjaśo*. The remarkable identity in the expressions employed by Herodotus and in this verse should be noted. Modern scholars are generally inclined to trace to Indian sources most of the fabulous things narrated of India in the Greek books. Tarn, after Laufer, traces the ant-legend to Mongolian sources (*The Greeks in Bactria and India*, pp. 106—7). The Son river was called *Eranoboa*, *Hiraṇyavāha*, gold-carrier.

2. *Frag. XXXIX*, pp. 78—9—Strabo, XV 1: 57. pp. 63—4. (The page references are, unless otherwise stated, to McCrindle's translations). Also Curtius, VIII, 9—*Alexander's Invasion*, p. 187.

Persian governor of Babylon who 'kept so great a number of Indian hounds, that four large villages of the plain were exempted from all other charges on condition of finding them in food'. The Indus was for him the only river, besides the Nile, that produced crocodiles.¹ Most interesting to the Greeks must have been his discovery that there were trees in India 'the fruit whereof is a wool exceeding in beauty and goodness that of sheep. The natives make their clothes of this tree wool'. 'The Indians in the army of Xerxes wore cotton dresses, and carried bows of cane, and arrows also of cane with iron at the point'. Some Indians with similar equipment rode on horses while others used chariots drawn by horses or wild asses.

4. *Ctesias*.

Ctesias the Cnidian, who wrote a book on India² was just one generation later than Herodotus. Ctesias spent seventeen years in the Persian court (c. 416-398 B. C.) as physician to the Emperor Artaxerxes Mnemon. He must have had numerous opportunities of hearing reports of India from Persian officials who visited the country and of meeting Indian merchants and ambassadors who came to the Persian court; and he obtained permission besides from the Persian king to consult the state archives. But his work has not survived except in an abridgement of Photius, a Patriarch of Constantinople in the ninth century A.D. (858-886), and a number of citations by earlier writers particularly Aelian and Pliny. In no respect does Ctesias mark an advance upon Herodotus, and almost all his statements can with perfect justice be characterised as tall lies. Even the few facts to be gathered from him—such as that all Indians were not black, that he had seen some white ones among them, and that Indians were noted for their sense of justice, their devotion to their king and their contempt of death—are too vague to be accepted with confidence, particularly from such a writer. He cannot be excused on the ground that Photius had a predilection for the fabulous and abridged his work laying stress unduly on the fabulous races and wonder-

1. I, 192 (hounds): IV, 44 (crocodiles).

2. McCrindle-*Ancient India as described by Ctesias the Cnidian*, Calcutta, 1882.

ful products of India that Ctesias had mentioned, and passing over the more valuable portions of his narrative; for no other writer found anything of value in him. The case is not much improved by our seeking to explain his dog-headed and dog-faced men, pygmies and such others by a reference to like monstrosities known to old Indian books. In fact Ctesias wrote himself down as a fibster when he described the Martikhora (man-eater), a creature of the size of a lion, with the face of a man, capable of shooting its poisonous stings from its tail to a great distance and thus killing every animal except an elephant, and added that he saw in Persia one of these monsters sent from India as gift to the Persian King !

In truth the period between Herodotus and Alexander is marked by a decided setback in the Greek knowledge of India. The Persians lost their Indian Satrapy after some time and Alexander did not come across Persian officials east of the Hindu Kush. Even Herodotus was perhaps not much read, and there is no evidence that Alexander knew of his account of Scylax's voyage. On the banks of the Indus he thought that he had reached the sources of the Nile, and on the banks of the Beas he told his soldiers that they were at no great distance from the Eastern Sea, i. e., the end of the earth in that direction.¹ It has been doubted if Alexander ever really heard of the Ganges or suspected the real extent of the contemporary empire of Magadha; the intention attributed to him of conquering the Prasii on the Ganges may well be a later legend; and possibly he knew of only the Sutej and just one kingdom beyond, that of the Gandaridae, the conquest of which would bring him to the shore of the Eastern Ocean.²

5. *Historians of Alexander*

But the expedition of Alexander was the first occasion when the West began to hear a good deal about India that was based on the direct personal observation of the reporters. By that time the Greeks had begun to take an active interest in scientific pursuits, and Alexander was himself a disciple of one

1. Arrian, *Anabasis*, VI, 1 and V, 26; Strabo, XV, 1, 25.

2. Cf. Tarn, *Cambridge Ancient History*, VI, pp. 410—11.

of the greatest masters of human knowledge. Though in his wars and campaigns the first place was given to military considerations, other interests of a wider character were by no means forgotten, and among his lieutenants and companions there were many scientists and literary men who later employed their pens in describing what they had seen and heard wherever they went no less than in celebrating the martial successes of Alexander. They were the first to communicate to the outside world more or less accurate knowledge of India, its physical features and products, its inhabitants and their social and political institutions. Three or four writers stand out among the contemporaries of Alexander because of the frequent references made to them by later writers. First is Nearchus, who in his account of his voyage in the Persian Gulf gave generally dependable information on many topics he happened to touch on. A Cretan by birth, he had been brought up at the Macedonian court and educated along with Alexander. His memoirs are no longer extant, but the works of Strabo and Arrian contain copious extracts from them. Then comes Onesicritus, the chief pilot of Nearchus' fleet, who wrote a life of Alexander which is now lost. He was a follower of the Cynic philosopher Diogenes, and was on this account chosen by Alexander as best fitted to initiate contact with the Indian sages of Takshashilā. His love of the marvellous often led him into exaggerations and Strabo says tartly that 'he may as well be called the master fabulist as the master pilot of Alexander'.¹ Modern writers also differ in their estimates of his credibility. Aristobulus was another writer who accompanied Alexander and wrote a history of his wars which was one of the principal sources used by Arrian in his *Anabasis* and by Plutarch in his life of Alexander. His interest seems to have been mainly geographical; he is said to have begun writing his work very late in life when he was over eighty years of age, and the historical parts of his work seem to have suffered from the influence of a new rhetorical mode, and the Alexander myth that was already beginning to take shape. Among the contemporary historians of Alexander there was none to beat Kleitarchus;

1. XV, 129: *Anc. Ind.*, pp. 34—5; Breloer, *KS*, ii, p. 26.

he was the son of Deinon, a historian of Rhodes, and he accompanied the expedition of Alexander. His history of the expedition was full of invention and romance and was held in little esteem by those who came after him. One of Kleitarchus' stories preserved by Aelian (and Strabo) is to the effect that Alexander and his army were once, while marching through a jungle, thrown in to a panic by mistaking a group of big-sized apes for a hostile army.¹

6. *Greek Ambassadors*

Subsequent to these writers came the ambassadors from the Hellenistic kingdoms to the Mauryan court, whose observations on India were based on a wider and somewhat closer knowledge of the country. Among them the most celebrated was, of course, Megasthenes. But there were also Deimachus, who resided for a long time in Pāṭaliputra, whither he was sent on an embassy by Seleucus to Amitraghāta (Bindusāra), the successor of Chandragupta; Patrocles, the admiral of Seleucus, who was sent out to explore the less known regions of Asia and whom Strabo described as the least mendacious of all writers on India whom he had consulted; Timosthenes, admiral of the fleet of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and Dionysius who, according to Pliny, was sent by the same ruler to the Indian King. But none of them seems to have added anything of real importance to what Megasthenes had stated about India. Megasthenes, in fact, marks the culmination of the knowledge which ancient Europe ever had of India. Writers who came after Megasthenes improved their knowledge of India's geography, but their account of Indian civilisation was accurate only in the measure in which they followed Megasthenes.

Megasthenes lived for some time with Sybyrtius, the Satrap of Arachosia, and from there Seleucus sent him out as ambassador to the court of Chandragupta, and he visited Chandragupta often during his stay at the capital; this was of course after the conclusion of the treaty of alliance between Chandragupta and Seleucus (305 B.C.).² Megasthenes evidently

1. *Anc. Ind. in Class. Lit.*, pp. 148—49.

2. Arrian (*Indica*, V) seems to say that Megasthenes visited Porus; but this has been rightly traced to a scribal error in the text of Arrian who

knew Kabul and the Panjab very well and travelled along the royal road from the frontier to the capital of the Mauryan empire. For his knowledge of the rest of India he depended on report. He wrote the *Indika*, a comprehensive work on India, apparently divided into four books describing the country, its soil, climate, animals and plants, its government and religion, the manners of the people and their arts. He sought to describe many things from the King's Court down to the remotest tribes. Many writers copied him assiduously in later times even as they cast aspersions on his veracity, as did Eratosthenes and Strabo.

Of the education and training of Megasthenes we know little. We may guess that he was an administrator and diplomat with a sober vision that sought to penetrate behind appearances and give a faithful report to his monarch of the strength and weakness of the neighbouring empire on the east. We do not know if he wrote out his work when he was in India or after his return to the West. In any event his statements on the Indian State, Law and Administration must be interpreted with care in the light of his natural prepossessions as an official of a large Hellenistic State and it is probable that some of them included an argument, criticism, or correction due to what other Greek writers before him had stated on particular topics. Megasthenes has often been denounced as untrustworthy both by ancient and modern writers, but this charge applies, properly speaking, only to what he writes from hearsay, particularly on the fabulous races of India and on Herakles and the Indian Dionysus. Of the former the learned Brahmins of the country had a great deal to tell him, but he says that he did not set down everything he heard, which may be readily accepted in the light of the Purāṇic accounts of such races. Quite probably he fell into some errors, but as we can be certain in no instance that we have his very words before us, it is always doubtful if the mistake was made by Megasthenes or the writers who used his work. Let us also remember that these

might have said only that Chandragupta was greater than Porus, implying a comparison, quite natural to him, to the advantage of Megasthenes as against the earlier group of writers who accompanied Alexander. See McCrindle, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 15. Lassen (ii, p. 668) accepts the interpretation of Arrian, *Anab.* V, 612, that Megasthenes visited India more than once.

writers extracted from Megasthenes just those data on India which they considered would be of interest to their readers, or which lent themselves to attractive literary treatment calculated to amuse them. Of the manner in which the *Indika* of Megasthenes was used by these authors, Schwanbeck remarks: 'Since Strabo, Arrianus, and Diodorus have directed their attention to relate nearly the same things, it has resulted that the greatest part of the *Indika* has been completely lost, and that of many passages, singularly enough, three epitomes are extant, to which occasionally a fourth is added by Plinius.'¹

7. *India : Size*

The statements of all ancient writers on the size of India and the length of its boundaries are but random guesses, and Strabo who has collected most of them, comments on their discrepancies and on the difficulty of being confident or precise in treating of Indian matters. Patrocles said that it was 15,000 stadia (1,724 miles) from the southernmost point of India to the most northerly, and this happy guess—it could not have been anything more—comes very near the truth, the real distance being 1800 miles. Other guesses are not so happy and need not be mentioned, though it may be noted that Megasthenes puts the length of the royal road he travelled by from the north-west to Pātaliputra at 10,000 stadia, and adds 6,000 stadia to it to arrive at the total breadth of the country, making a computation from the time taken in voyages from the sea up the Ganges to Pātaliputra. Eratosthenes, the President of the Alexandrian Library from 240 to 196 B.C., was the first

1. McCrindle, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 19. Diodorus, native of Sicily, was a contemporary of Julius Caesar: his *Bibliotheca* comprised 40 books, some of them no longer extant: book II., chh. 35—42 epitomise Megasthenes: bk. XVII gives an account of Alexander's invasion, and XVIII and XIX contain short notices of India:—all translated by McCrindle in his works. Arrian (A. D. 132) wrote the *Anabasis* and *Indika*, using the contemporary account of Alexander and the work of Megasthenes. Strabo came from Amasia in Asia Minor, c. 64 B.C.—19 A.D., His *Geography* is a very comprehensive work: Bk. XV, chh. 1 and 2 are devoted to India and Ariana respectively, and are translated by McCrindle in his *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*. Strabo drew his material mostly from the contemporaries of Alexander and from Megasthenes. Pliny the Elder, 23—79 A.D., wrote a cyclopaedic *Natural History* in thirty-seven books: the sixth book contains his geography of India, based mainly on the *Indika* of Megasthenes, translated by McCrindle, *ibid.*

real geographer of the Hellenistic age, who studied and arranged systematically all the geographical knowledge available in his day; but his conclusions on the position and configuration of India were far from correct. He thought that the country was of the shape of an irregular rhomboid with the Indus and the Himalayas for its shorter Western and Northern sides, measuring respectively 13,000 and 16,000 stadia; the longer sides each exceeded its opposite by 3,000 stadia. His orientation was completely wrong and he put the southern extremity of the peninsula farther east than the mouth of the Ganges. Some idea of the exaggerated notions entertained of the size of India may be had from Ctesias' opinion that India was not less than the rest of Asia; he was excelled by Onesicritus who regarded it as the third part of the habitable world, while Nearchus gathered that to traverse the plains only occupied a journey of four months.¹ The existence of Ceylon was vaguely known to Onesicritus.

Megasthenes greatly exaggerated the length of India from north to south, and put it at 22,300 stadia at its shortest.² But he is right in noting that India well nigh embraced the whole of the northern Tropic zone of the earth and in the extreme south the gnomon of the sundial may frequently be observed to cast no shadow or cast it to the southward (in summer) while the constellation of the Bear is by night invisible.³

8. *Climate*

In India's climate, the rains attracted their attention most, as they had not seen anything like them before. Aristobulus noted that rain fell for the first time after Alexander reached Taxila, and continued incessantly all the time he marched eastward to the Beas and back to the Jhelum; he knew that the monsoon (the Etesian winds as he calls them) brought the rain. The relatively very scanty rainfall of the lower Indus

1. Patrocles in Strabo, II, 1.2 (Falconer, i, p. 106); other writers in XV, i, 10—2 (*Anc. Ind. in Class. Lit.* pp. 15—19). See also *Megasthenes and Arrian. Frags* IV ff. Strabo, XV, 1, 15 (pp. 20—21) for Onesicritus on Ceylon (Taprobane).

2. *Frag.* VIII (p. 52).

3. *Frag.* I (Diod. II, 35), p. 30.

valley, which gets little benefit from either monsoon, did not escape him, and he notes that in the spring and summer of 325 B.C., Alexander spent nearly ten months on the voyage down the river 'without ever seeing rain even when the Etesian winds were at their height'. Eratosthenes speaks of the rains falling regularly every year both in summer and in winter.¹ He thought that the evaporation from the vast rivers was another cause of rain, besides the monsoons.

9. Rivers

The immensity of the Indian rivers, of the Indus and Ganges systems, is noted and commented on by Megasthenes. The Ganges 'which at its source is 30 stadia broad, flows from north to south, and empties its waters into the ocean forming the eastern boundary of the Gangaridai. Another river, about the same size as the Ganges, called the Indus, has its sources, like its rival, in the north, and falling into the ocean forms *on its way* the boundary of India'. Besides these two great rivers and their tributaries, there were 'a great many others of every description',² and many of them were navigable. Arrian recognised, following Nearchus that the larger portion of India is a plain formed of alluvial deposits of the large rivers particularly the Indus and the Ganges.³ The erratic changes in the courses of the rivers of the Indus system were noticed by Aristobulus; once when he went on some business into the country he saw a tract of land deserted on account of the Indus having shifted its course into a new channel; there were the ruins of a thousand towns and villages once full of life.⁴ During floods the rivers rose to considerable heights and inundated vast areas, the cities located on eminences being turned into islands for a time. When the water subsided and the

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 17 and 20 (pp. 21—3, 25).

2. *Frag.* I (pp. 33—4): Arrian, *Indika*, ch. 4 (pp. 186—94). Megasthenes records the fable of river Silas in which nothing would float and which petrified everything plunged in it. Fr. XXI-XXIV, pp. 65—6: 196—7.

3. Strabo, XV, 1, 16 (p. 21): Arrian's *Anabasis* Bk. V, ch. vi, pp. 88—90 of *Ancient India, Its Invasion by Alexander*.

4. Strabo, XV, 1, 19 (p. 25).

land but half dried, it was sown and planted with little labour and perfectly satisfactory results.¹

10. *Fertility of Soil*

The soil was fertile and the greater part of it was under irrigation and bore two crops in the year both of fruit and grain. Rice, millet and sesamum were sown in summer; wheat, barley and pulse, in winter. Aristobulus noted that rice stood in water-logged fields and was sown in beds. Megasthenes traces the superior stature and the proud bearing of the people to the abundant means of subsistence at their command; he says that famine and scarcity were unknown in India. Sugar-cane is described as a reed yielding honey without bees, and the cotton plant continues to attract attention, Nearchus recording that fine webs were made from tree wool which was also used in a raw state by the Macedonians for stuffing mattresses and the padding of saddles.² Strabo preserves a description of the banyan tree by Onesicritus which is worth reproducing : 'there are some large trees from which branches grow out to the length even of twelve cubits. These branches then grow downwards as if they had been bent until they touch the ground. They next penetrate into the soil and take root like shoots that have been planted. Then they spring upwards and form a trunk, whence again, in the manner described, branches bend themselves downward and plant the ground with one layer after another, and so on in this order, so that from a single tree there is formed a long shady canopy like a tent supported by numerous pillars.' As regards the size of the trees, he states that 'their trunks could scarcely be clasped by five men'. Aristobulus stated that the shade of a single tree could shelter fifty horsemen from the noon tide heat, while Onesicritus put the number at four hundred; Nearchus said that even ten thousand men could rest under the shade of a single tree.³ Many medicinal plants and roots, both salutary

1. *Ibid.*, 18 (pp. 23—24).

2. *Meg. Frags.* I, XI (pp. 31, 54—5). Strabo XV, 1, 18 and 20.

3. Strabo, XV, 1, 21 (pp. 26—7). Arrian, *Indika*, xi (p. 210). Aśoka planted banyan trees on the roads: and there is an old Tamil verse which contrasts the tiny seed of the tree with its vast size capable of sheltering a whole army.

and noxious, were grown in India, and plants which yielded a great variety of dyes; Aristobulus noted that under the law any person who discovered a deadly substance without announcing its antidote at the same time rendered himself liable to the penalty of death, but one who discovered both got a reward from the king. India, like Arabia and Ethiopia, produced cinnamon, spikenard and other aromatics.¹

11. *Minerals*

The mineral wealth of India is noted by Megasthenes. There was much gold and silver, and copper and iron in no small quantity, and tin and other metals employed in making articles of use and ornament, as well as the implements and accoutrements of war.² His observations on ant-gold and river-gold have been noticed already. Ceylon (Taprobane), he said, was more productive of gold and large pearls than India. He gave a good account of pearl-fishing, and stated that each shoal of oysters had a leader, to capture whom was to get the whole group. 'The fishermen allow the fleshy parts of such as they catch to rot away, and keep the bone, which forms the ornament; for the pearl in India is worth thrice its weight in refined gold.'

12. *Animals*

Among Indian animals the Elephant easily got the first place in the attention of almost every Greek observer.³ The Indian elephants were seen to be larger and stronger than the African elephants, and Megasthenes thought that this was due to the Indian soil supplying food in unsparing profusion. The elephants of Ceylon were larger still. The longevity of an elephant's life was well known, though Onesicritus put it too high when he stated that they lived three hundred years, sometimes five hundred, and that they were very vigorous when

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 22(p. 28).

2. *Frag.* I (Diod. II, 36) p. 31: pearls, *Frag.* XVIII, L. B., (pp. 62, 114) and Arrian *Indika*, viii (p. 202).

3. *Frag.* I (Diod. II, 38) p. 35: *Ibid.* (Diod. II, 37) pp. 33—4; Strabo XV 1, 42 and 43 (pp. 49—50)—for one phrase here Bevan's translation is 'to sew beautifully' for McCrindle's 'to swim most admirably'—Arrian, *Indika*, XIII, XIV, pp. (213—4).

about two hundred. Arrian, obviously following Megasthenes, says more correctly that the longest lived animals attained an age of two hundred years, but many died prematurely of disease. The manner of hunting the elephant, described briefly by Nearchus and in greater detail by Megasthenes, was much the same then as the Keddah operations of today. The elephants were easily tamed and were naturally of a mild and gentle disposition, so as to approximate to rational beings. 'Some of them have taken up their drivers who have fallen in battle, and carried them off in safety from the field. Others have fought in defence of their masters who had sought refuge by creeping between their forelegs and have thus saved their lives. If in a fit of anger they kill either the man who feeds them or the man who trains them, they are so overpowered with regret that they refuse food and sometimes die of hunger'. 'They even learn to throw stones at a mark, to use weapons of war, and to swim most admirably.' Nearchus spoke of chariots drawn by elephants as a most valued possession, and made the curious statement that a woman who won the present of an elephant from her lover was highly honoured and no one thought of blaming her for sacrificing her virtue for such a prize.¹ And Strabo remarks that this contradicts Megasthenes' statement that private persons were not allowed to keep a horse or an elephant, as they were the property of kings only. The elephant corps was a great asset in war and the possession of a vast force of the largest sized elephants by the Gangaridai² made them the most dreaded of all the Indian states.

Next to the elephants, we find monkeys and snakes figuring prominently in the Greek accounts. In the forests on the banks of the upper Jhelum long-tailed apes of an uncommon size were found in vast numbers, and Kleitarchus' famous story of Alexander's strange encounter with a troop of them has been noticed above. They were quick to imitate everything they saw and were therefore easily caught by hunters washing their eyes with water in their presence and then leav-

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 43(p. 50): Arrian, *Indika*, XVII, p. 222.

2. The Gangaridai and the Prasii (Prāchyas) are often mentioned together by the Greek writers and must be taken to apply to the people of the valley of Lower Ganges.

ing pots of bird-lime behind which sealed the eyes of the apes when they came and smeared their eyes with it; an alternative method was the use of baggy trousers smeared inside with bird-lime. Different varieties of monkeys were known to Megasthenes and described in detail by him as may be seen from extracts preserved by Aelian. One of these varieties so resembled men in appearance that they could easily be mistaken for ascetics, and in an Indian city called Latage they were provided every day with a regular meal under the King's orders after which they quietly withdrew to the forests without causing any damage or injury. Of another type in the eastern Himalayas we read: 'If these creatures are left unmolested, they keep within the coppices, living on wild fruit; but should they hear the hunter's halloo and the baying of the hounds they dart up the precipices with incredible speed, for they are habituated to climbing the mountains. They defend themselves by rolling down stones on their assailants, which often kill those they hit. The most difficult to catch are those which roll the stones. Some are said to have been brought, though with difficulty and after long intervals, to the Prasii, but these were either suffering from diseases or were females heavy with young.¹ Arrian remarked that the knowledge of the apes of the Indian forests was so common in his time that he did not think it necessary to say much regarding their size or the beauty which distinguishes them or the mode in which they are hunted.²

The smaller poisonous varieties of the snakes, spotted and nimble in their movements, were noticed by Nearchus who expressed his surprise at the multitude and malignancy of their tribe.³ When the rivers rose in flood and filled the plains with water, they invaded the dwelling houses in villages, and on this account the people had to raise their beds to a great height from the ground, or even to abandon their homes through the presence of these pests in very large numbers. 'In

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 29 (p. 36): *Meg. Frags.* XIII, XIII B (21), (pp. 57—8. 60—61).

2. *Indika*, XV (p. 218).

3. Strabo, XV, 1, 45 (pp. 51—2): Arrian, *Indika*, XV (pp. 218—19). The device of raised beds as protection against reptiles was noted by Marco Polo in South India in the 13th century A. D.

fact, were it not that a great proportion of the tribe suffered destruction by the waters, the country would be reduced to a desert. The minute size of some and the immense size of others are sources of danger; the former, because it is difficult to guard against their attacks, the latter by reason of their strength, for snakes are to be seen of sixteen cubits in length'. There were snake-charmers moving about the country and they were able to cure snake-bites, and Alexander collected round him for the benefit of his army a group of the most skilful among the snake-charmers. The longest snake seen by Aristobulus was nine cubits and a span in length, but Onesicritus¹ stated that Abisares, King of the mountain country, kept two serpents one of which was 80 cubits in length and the other 140. Megasthenes knew of pythons that could swallow stags and bulls whole. He also speaks of flying serpents, two cubits in length, which flew by night and dropped a poisonous secretion which blistered the skins of persons on whom it fell. There were also winged scorpions of an extraordinary size.²

Hunting dogs of astonishing strength and courage were noticed by the companions of Alexander in the country of Sophytes, and Alexander received one hundred and fifty of them as a present from him. A curious incident in Sophytes' court is related at some length by almost all the writers and here is Strabo's version of it : 'To prove their mettle, two of these dogs were set on to attack a lion, and when these were overpowered, two others were set on. When the contest was about equal, Sophytes ordered a man to seize one of the dogs by the leg and to drag him way, or if he still held on, to cut off the limb. Alexander at first refused to let the dog be so mangled, as he wished to save its life, but when Sophytes said, "I will give you four instead of it", he consented, and saw the dog allow its leg to be cut off by slow incision rather than let go its hold³. It was believed that tiger blood ran in the veins of these dogs !

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 28(p. 34). It is this statement of Onesicritus for which Strabo characterises him as a 'master fabulist' as well as the master pilot of Alexander.

2. *Frag.* XII and XVI(pp. 56—61).

3. Strabo, XV, 1, 31 and 37, (pp. 38—39, 46). Note 1 on p. 39 gives references to other accounts. *Meg. Frag.* XII (p. 56).

The tiger itself the Greeks naturally had little chance of coming across. Nearchus saw the skin of a tiger, but not a live animal. He heard, however, that it equalled in size the largest horse, but for swiftness and strength no other animal could be compared to it ; that the tiger when it encountered the elephant, leapt upon the head of the elephant and strangled it with ease ; and that the animals usually seen and designated tigers were but jackals with spotted skins and larger than other jackals—which, of course, is a quaint description of leopards. According to Megasthenes the largest tigers were found in the country of the Prasii, almost twice the size of lions. He once saw a tame tiger led by four men, seizing a mule, overpowering it and dragging it to him, all by its hind leg ; such was the strength of the animal¹.

Megasthenes noted that some animals known only in a tame state in Greece were found also in the wild state in India, such as sheep, dogs, goats and oxen. The one-horned horse or *kartazon* of which a somewhat minute account is preserved by Aelian is generally taken to be the rhinoceros². Nearchus came across whales of enormous size in his voyage before he entered the Persian Gulf, and Aelian probably follows Megasthenes in his interesting description of these monsters 'five times larger than the largest elephant'. The rib of a whale was as much as twenty cubits and its lip fifteen cubits³.

Among the birds, parrots and peacocks attracted particular notice. Arrian criticises Nearchus for writing at length about parrots as if they were a curiosity and saying that they were indigenous to India ; but Aelian's account, doubtless based on Nearchus and other writers, is not devoid of interest : 'There are, I am informed, three species of them, and all these, if taught to speak, as children are taught, become as talkative as children, and speak with a human voice ; but in the words they utter a bird-like scream, and neither send out any distinct or musical notes, nor being wild and untaught are able to talk'. The same

1. Arrian, *Indika*, XV (p. 217) : Strabo, XV, 1, 37, (p. 45)—*Meg. Frag.* XII, (p. 56).

2. *Meg. Frag.* XV, XVB (pp. 58—60) : Strabo, XV, 1, 56 (p. 59 and n. 3)

3. Strabo, XV, 1, 11—12 (p. 91) : *Meg. Frag.* LIX (pp. 164—65).

writer observes that the peacocks of India were the largest anywhere met, and Alexander was so charmed with their beauty that he threatened the severest penalties against any one who should kill a peacock¹.

Having gained some idea of what the Greeks knew of India's natural phenomena, we may now turn to their accounts of its humanity, social institutions and polity, and here Megasthenes is our leading authority, the attention of earlier writers having been confined to the North-west and to local customs and institutions in that part of the country. India, being of enormous size when taken as a whole, was, according to Megasthenes' information, peopled by races both diverse and numerous, not one of which was originally of foreign descent, all being evidently indigenous. Moreover, India neither received a colony from abroad, nor sent out a colony to any other nation². These are statements of some historical value ; the memory of the incoming of Aryans had completely faded out, and quite probably, the movement of colonisation to the Eastern lands, Indo-china and Malaysia, had not yet begun. But the contact with the Hellenistic kingdom was already established, and the time was not distant when Asoka's zeal for Dhamma would carry the name of India far and wide to the West certainly, and possibly to the North and East as well.

13. *Legends.*

Though Megasthenes seems to have introduced his account of the legends centring round Dionysus and Herakles with the observation that he heard them from 'the men of greatest learning among the Indians', it is obvious that all the versions of these stories now accessible to us have been thoroughly edited from the Greek point of view. We may be sure that no Indian scholars ever spoke of Dionysus and Herakles under those names, and that, if anything, Megasthenes took some things that he heard to be the same as some other things known to him better, and made his own identifications before setting down his thoughts.³ Let us remember also that the vainglorious credulity of Alexander

1. Arrian, *Indika*, XV (p. 218): *Meg. Frag.* LIX (p. 159): Aelian, *V*, 21 (*Anc. Ind. in Class. Lit.*, p. 139, and n. 1).

2. *Frag.* I (Diod. II, 38), xlvi (Strabo, XV, 1, 6), *Meg.* pp. 35, 107-8.

had given a good start to these legends with the earlier writers, with whose works Megasthenes was very well acquainted, Dionysus figures in these legends as the conqueror and civiliser of India and its first ruler, the founder of cities, the teacher of industrial arts, and the establisher of religion and polity. The Oxydrakoi claimed to be descended from Dionysus, the vine grew in their country and they displayed great pomp in their processions, and their kings set out on their military expeditions in the Bacchic manner ; from these facts, modern scholars have inferred that Dionysus of these narratives was a Greek representation of the Indian god Śiva. It is difficult either to confirm or contradict this opinion, but it is clearly wrong to think that Herakles represents Kṛishṇa. There can be no doubt that some elements of Kṛishṇaism are mixed up here, for Arrian remarks : 'This Herakles is held in especial honour by the Souraseni (Śūrasenas) who possess two large cities, Methorā (Mathurā) and Cleisobora (Kṛishṇapura ?), and through whose country flows a navigable river called Iobanes (Yamunā).' But the mention by Megasthenes of his daughter Pandaia and of the Pāṇḍya kingdom in the south over which she was set to rule, and some other traits, particularly the Sibai (Śivas) claiming descent from Herakles, bring him once more into the cycle of Śaiva legends. Arrian gives the curious information, which doubtless he owes to Megasthenes, that from Dionysus to Sandrakottos the Indians counted 153 kings and a period of 6042 years broken by three periods of republican rule, and that Herakles came fifteen generations after Dionysus—figures which do not tally with any known Purāṇic reckonings which they resemble so much. Herakles is also said to have founded 'no small number of cities, the most renowned and greatest of which he called Palibothra'¹.

14. People

The Indians, says Arrian, are slender and tall in person, and of much lighter build than other men.² Though some of

1. *Meg. Frag.* I (Diod. II, 38—9). pp. 36—40: Fr. XLVI (pp. 107—111)—Strabo, XV, 1, 6—8 (pp. 11—14): Fr. LVIII (pp. 158—9): Arrian *Indika*, VII ix, (pp. 198—204).

2. *Indika*, xvii (p 221): also *Inv. of India by Alexander*, p. 85 on the stature of men in the Indus Valley.

them are dark in complexion, they neither have woolly hair, nor complexions so intensely dark as the Ethiopians, and the reason for this is found in the humid atmosphere of India.¹ Indians seldom suffered from disease and enjoyed long lives (Onesicritus gives 130 years, and even more) as they lived frugally and abstained from wine though they drank rice-beer commonly enough.² In the dominions of King Sophytes every new born baby was inspected when it was two months old by State officials and if any defect or deformation in its limbs was discovered it was ordered to be killed. 'In contracting marriages they do not seek an alliance with high birth, but make their choice by the looks, for beauty in children is a quality highly appreciated.' Curtius and Diodorus both give substantially the same account of this matter, obviously derived from a common source; we see from Strabo,³ who says the same things of Kathaians, that Onesicritus is the authority for these statements. But we cannot be sure whether he wrote down exactly what he saw in India, or idealised it in the light of very similar Spartan institutions known to him. He also stated that the handsomest man was chosen as king among these peoples, and that they sought to embellish the beauty of their persons by dyeing their beards and their garments with the colours of surprising beauty which the country produced. Megasthenes attributed the great artistic skill of the Indians to the pure air they inhaled and the very finest water they drank.⁴

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 24 (pp. 29—30): Arrian, *Indika*, vi (pp. 197—8).

2. Strabo, XV, 1, 45 (p. 52)—*Meg. Frag.* XXVIII (p. 69): also Strabo, XV, 1, 34 (p. 41), Arrian, *Indika*, XV. (p. 219).

3. Curtius, IX, i (p. 219): Diod. XVII, 91 (pp. 279—80): Strabo, XV, 1, 30 (p. 38). Here is Curtius' description of Sophytes and his sons as they came out of their capital city to meet Alexander; 'He was distinguished above all the other Indians by his tall and handsome figure. His royal robe, which flowed down to his very feet, was all inwrought with gold and purple. His sandals were of gold and studded with precious stones, and even his arms and wrists were curiously adorned with pearls. At his ears he wore pendants of precious stones which from their lustre and magnitude were of an inestimable value. His sceptre too was made of gold and set with beryls' (IX, 1, p. 220). Arrian, *Indika*, XVI (p. 220) cites Nearchus on Indians dyeing their beards. Some other writer cited by Strabo, XV, 1, 71 (pp. 76—7) asserts that Indians always wore white, contrary to what is said by others: he adds that they wore long hair and beards, and plaited the hair and bound it with a fillet.

4. Diod. II, 36 (p. 31).

15. *Taxila*

Taxila (Takshaśilā) was the first large city seen by Alexander and his companions after they had crossed the Indus into India proper, and in this friendly city they spent some days somewhat free from the warlike atmosphere of a military camp. It is worth our while, therefore, to gain some idea of the impression produced by this very populous and wealthy city and its institutions on the minds of the Greeks before we proceed to consider the more systematic account of Megasthenes, or rather what has survived of it. We may also review the details relating to other states and peoples in the North-west of India.

Taxila was a large city governed by good laws. The surrounding country was thickly peopled and extremely fertile, and the wealth of the city and its ruler might be judged from the presents offered to Alexander and his friends by *Taxiles*. Some strange and unusual customs of *Taxila* are noticed by *Aristobulus*. Those who, from poverty, were unable to marry off their daughters, exposed them in the flower of their youth for sale in the market place, advertising them by the sound of war-drums and conches ; a prospective husband was allowed to inspect the back of the girl first, then her front, and if there was mutual agreement, the alliance followed. Another custom was to throw out the dead to be devoured by vultures, doubtless a trace of Iranian influence. Polygamy was not unknown here as elsewhere, and *Satī* was practised among *Taxilans*, and the widow who refused to burn was held in contempt.¹ *Satī* was observed among the *Kathaians* also, and *Strabo* is frankly sceptical of *Diodorus*' reason for the practice, namely that it was meant to check women seeking to dispose of their husbands by poison when they happened to fall in love with younger men.² From *Diodorus*, however, we get one of the earliest and most vivid descriptions of the actual scenes that marked such occasions. An Indian commander in the Army of *Eumenes* was killed in battle in Iran in 316 B.C. ; he had two wives and both

1. *Strabo*, XV, 1, 28 (pp. 33—4): *ib.*, 62 (p.69).

2. *Strabo*, XV, 1, 30 (p. 38): *Diodorus* XIX, 33—4 (pp. 202—4). *McGrindle's* translation of the extract from *Diodorus* has been slightly altered in the light of *Bevan's* version at *CHI*, I p. 415. See also *Diod.* XVII, ch 91 (p. 279 of *Invasion* and n. I—i) .

offered to burn themselves on his pyre ; the matter was taken to the Greek generals who decided in favour of the younger wife burning, as the elder one was with child. 'Whereupon the one who lost her cause went away weeping and wailing, rent the veil from her head, and tore her hair as if some terrible news had been told her. The other, overjoyed at her victory, set forth for the funeral pile, crowned with fillets by the women who belonged to her, and decked out splendidly as for a wedding. She was escorted by her kindred setting forth in song the praises of her virtues. When she came near to the pyre, she took off her adornments and distributed them to her servants and friends leaving them as memorials of her, as it were, to those who had loved her. Her adornments consisted of a multitude of finger-rings, set with precious stones of divers colours ; upon her head there was no small number of little golden stars, between which were placed sparkling stones of all sorts ; about her neck she wore several necklaces each a little larger than the one above it. At length she took farewell of her domestics, and was assisted by her brother to mount the pyre, and, to the great admiration of the crowd which had gathered together to see the spectacle, she made her exit from life in heroic style. For the whole army under arms marched thrice round the pile before fire was set to it, and the victim, having meanwhile laid herself by her husband's side, scorned to demean herself by uttering shrieks even when the flames were raging round her. The spectators were moved, some to pity and some to exuberant praise, while there were not wanting Greeks who condemned the custom as savage and inhumane.'

16. *Sages.*

The Greeks first met Indian sages in the neighbourhood of Taxila, and there are many versions of their meetings with tangible variations that puzzled even Strabo and still continue to vex scholars who study accuracy in such far off things. Nearchus, Onesicritus and Aristobulus all gave their own accounts, and Megasthenes worked them up with the aid perhaps of yet other accounts of which we know nothing ; all this is clear from Strabo. Arrian and Plutarch give an account of Alexander's interview with the sages which took place more

likely in Taxila rather than in the country of Sambos and after his revolt.¹ Nearchus' account of the sages is brief, but illuminating as explaining the basis of some of Megasthenes' statements on Indian social organisation. 'Some of the Brahmanes take part in political life, and attend the kings as counsellors. The others are engaged in the study of nature. Kalanos belongs to the latter class. Women study philosophy along with them, and all lead an austere life.' Kalanos (Kalyāna ?) of Taxila was the one who allowed himself, as Plutarch narrates, to be persuaded by Taxiles to visit Alexander, accompanied him to Persia, and there, disregarding the entreaties of Alexander, burnt himself alive when he fell ill for the first time in his seventy-third year. There was unanimity among the philosophers regarding the propriety of self-immolation, and Megasthenes noticed this. Aristobulus appears to have noticed the difference between *sanyāsins* and *vānaprasthas* as he says that of the two Brāhmaṇa sages the saw, the elder had his head shaved, but the other wore his hair. Both of them were followed by their disciples. He may be right in saying that they spent their spare time in the market place, and got their food free, but that this was a privilege they enjoyed in return for their being public counsellors can hardly be accepted as a correct statement. They came to Alexander's table, took their meal standing, and exhibited feats of endurance like lying in the sun or standing on one leg for a whole day. Onesicritus states that Alexander sent him to the sages in the first instance as he heard they went about naked and did not accept invitations from other persons. He found at a distance of less

1. Nearchus in Strabo, XV, 1, 66 (p. 72): Onesicritus *ib.* 63—5 (pp. 69—72). Aristobulus, *ib.* 61 (pp. 68—9); Megasthenes, *ib.* 58—60 (pp. 64—67)—*Frag.* XLI (pp. 97—103). Plutarch, *ch.* 64—5 of his *Life of Alexander* for which see McCrindle, *Invasion*, pp. 313—15. Also a short account of Curtius, VIII, *ch.* ix (p. 190). Diodorus, XVII, *ch.* 107 (p. 301) on self-immolation of Kalanos; also Strabo, XV, 1, 68 (pp. 73—4). Lastly, McCrindle, *Invasion*, pp. 386—92 on Kalanos. For a recent criticism, somewhat too subjective, of these accounts, see Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, pp. 428—31, who discounts Onesicritus completely and says; 'Onesikritos indeed put out a story that Alexander had not talked to the men himself but had sent *him* to do it: but he could do no better than make one of his Indians give the ordinary Greek account of the Golden Age and the other talk a few cynical common places, and his version never exercised any influence'. Plutarch (*ch.* 65, opening sentences) believed that Alexander met the sages himself and also sent Onesicritus to them.

than three miles from Taxila, fifteen men standing in different postures, and among them Kalanos and Mandanis (or Dandamis as in other texts). Kalanos gave a general account of the golden age in the past, but would not proceed further unless the Greek visitor stripped and lay down naked on the same stones with himself. The older and wiser Mandanis rebuked Kalanos for his insolence, and was more accommodating to the guest's curiosity and they compared notes on the ideas of Greek and Indian philosophers. Mandanis approved much that he heard from Onesicritus of Greek philosophy as taught by Pythagoras, Socrates and Diogenes, but criticised the Greeks for preferring custom to nature and refusing to give up clothing. Conversation was not easy as it had to be conducted through three interpreters who understood nothing of what they were asked to translate. 'One might as well expect water to flow pure through mud' said Mandanis. Alexander is said to have met no fewer than ten of these philosophers and propounded hard questions to them; they answered them to his satisfaction and he rewarded them duly.

17. *Philosophers*

Megasthenes has much to say on Indian philosophers; he must have gained his knowledge from previous writers as well as from personal observation. His distinction between those who inhabited the mountains and worshipped Dionysus, and those who lived in the plains and worshipped Herakles is not easily understood, and Strabo himself remarked: 'These accounts are fabulous, and are contradicted by many writers.' His account of the Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇasis much more valuable, though there is room for doubt about what exactly he meant by these terms. The Brāhmaṇas, he says, were held in higher esteem and had a more consistent dogmatic system. The pre-natal ceremonials (*saṃskāras*), the stages of life (*āśramas*) and the rules and practices governing them, the relative freedom from restraint enjoyed by the *grihastha* (house-holder) were all known to Megasthenes, though on some matters he seems to portray theory rather than actual fact, as when he says that the Brāhmaṇas marry as many wives as possible to secure good progeny; or when he gives the period of study as thirty-seven years. Their

philosophy and cosmogony which had some things in common with Greek teaching on the subjects are also briefly expounded by him. He says that women were kept out of philosophical studies for fear of the bad women divulging the secret lore to unworthy people, and the good ones deserting their husbands for a life of asceticism; but here he is contradicted by Nearchus, though on this matter quite possibly both theory and practice differed in different localities. This account of the Brāhmaṇas then is reasonably accurate and interesting as a record of the impression produced by them in the mind of an observant foreigner. But the description of the Śramaṇas is not a little puzzling, because while the name generally indicates Buddhist ascetics, there is little in the description itself which will not apply to Brāhmanical ascetics. Here is the account as reproduced by Strabo : 'Of the Sarmanes the most highly honoured are the Hylobioi. They live in forests, subsist on leaves and wild fruits, wear garments made from the bark of trees, and abstain from wine and commerce with women. The kings consult them by messengers regarding the causes of events, and use their mediation in worshipping and supplicating the gods. Next in honour to the Hylobioi are the physicians, for they apply philosophy to the study of the nature of man. They are frugal in their habits, but do not live in the fields. Their food consists of rice and barley-meal which every one gives who is asked, as well as every one who receives them as a guest. By their knowledge of medicine they know how to make marriages fertile and how to procure male or female children as may be desired. They effect cures rather by regulating diet than by the use of medicines. The remedies in most repute are ointments and plasters. All others they suppose to partake largely of a noxious nature. Both this class and the other class of persons practise fortitude as well by undergoing active toil as by enduring suffering, so that they will remain motionless for a whole day in one fixed posture. Besides these there are divines and sorcerers and those who are conversant with the rites and customs relating to the dead, who go about villages and towns begging. Those who are more cultured than these, even they allow themselves to make use of popular ideas about hell which seem to make for godliness and purity of life. Women study philosophy

with some of the Sarmanes, on the condition of observing sexual continence like the men.' The name 'forest-dwellers' (Hylobioi) does create a doubt if Megasthenes had the *vāna-prasthas* in mind ; but the Buddhist monks also shunned cities and villages and dwelt in forests ; and the term Sarmanes (Śramaṇas) as well as the social services described, such as healing the sick and preaching to the people seem more appropriate to the Buddhist monks than to Brahman ascetics ; again women were admitted more readily into the order of *bhikkunis* than among Brahmanical ascetics. If this reasoning is correct, we have here one of the earliest accounts of the Buddhist order of monks, and it is to be noted that when Megasthenes wrote, they did not yet command as much esteem in Society as the Brāhmanas. Asoka's labours for the cause of Buddhism lay still in the future ; but the *bhikkus* were already making a name for themselves by their zeal in the practice of Dhamma.

18. North-Western India.

To return to the notices of the North-west by Alexander's contemporaries. Nearchus noted that the laws of Indians differed from those of other nations and were not committed to writing, a statement obviously inspired by the name *smṛiti* (memory) for the law codes, and repeated by Megasthenes also. Among certain tribes, Nearchus observed, a girl was given away as the prize to the victor in a boxing match. Among others land was cultivated in common by a number of families who shared the produce in harvest time according to needs for the ensuing year, and then destroyed the remainder so as to encourage industrious habits and discourage idleness¹. The dress worn by the Indians was made of cotton of a brighter white colour than any cotton found elsewhere, or appeared so in contrast to their dark complexion. 'They wear an under-garment of cotton which reaches below their knee half-way down to the ankles, and also two upper garments of which they throw one over their shoulders, and twist the other in folds round their head. The Indians wear also ear-rings of ivory, but only the

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 66 (p. 72). *Ib.* 53 (pp. 55—6) for Megasthenes on absence of written laws. Both Nearchus and Megasthenes knew that writing was well known in India and used for other purposes.

rich ones...Such Indians as are thought anything of use parasols as a screen from the heat. They wear shoes made of white leather, and these are elaborately trimmed, while the soles are variegated, and high healed to make the wearer seem so much the taller¹.'

• 19. *Arms*

Arrian give a fairly detailed account of the arms and outfit of the Indian soldiers, based on the authority of Nearchus²; "The foot soldiers carry a bow made of equal length with the man who bears it. This they rest upon the ground, and pressing against it with their left foot, thus discharge the arrow, having drawn the string far backwards far the shaft they use is little short of being three yards long, and there is nothing which can resist an Indian archer's shot,—neither shield nor breast-plate, nor any stronger defence if such there be. In their left hand they carry bucklers made of undressed ox-hide, which are not so broad as those who carry them, but are about as long. Some are equipped with javelins instead of bows, but all wear a sword, which is broad in the blade, but not longer than three cubits; and this, when they engage in close fight (which they do with reluctance), they wield with both hands, to fetch down a lustier blow. The horsemen are equipped with two lances like the lances called *saunia*, and with a shorter buckler than that carried by the foot-soldiers. But they do not put saddles on their horses, nor do they curb them with bits like the bits in use among the Greeks or the Kelts, but they fit on round the extremity of the horse's mouth a circular piece of stitched raw hide studded with pricks of iron or brass pointing in-

1. Arrian, *Indika*, XVI (pp. 219—20). McCrindle's translation modified in the light of Bevan's version in *CHI*, I, p. 412. Curtius, Bk, viii, ch. 9 has the following: 'The character of the people is here, as elsewhere, formed by the position of their country and its climate. They cover their persons down to the feet with fine muslin, are shod with sandals, and coil round their heads cloths of linen (cotton). They hang precious stones as pendants from their ears, and persons of high social rank, or of great wealth, deck their wrist and upper arm with bracelets of gold. They frequently comb, but seldom cut, the hair of their head. The beard of the chin they never cut at all, but they shave off the hair from the rest of the face, so that it looks polished.' Also Strabo, XV, 1, 54 (p. 57)—Meg. Fr. XXVII (p. 70).

2. Arrian, *Indika*, XVI (pp. 220—1): cf. Strabo, XV, 1, 66 (pp. 72—73), much briefer:

wards, but not very sharp; if a man is rich he uses pricks made of ivory. Within the horse's mouth is put an iron prong like a skewer to which the reins are attached. When the rider, then, pulls the reins, the prong controls the horse, and the pricks which are attached to this prong goad the mouth, so that it cannot but obey the reins.'

The chariot and the elephant played an important part in Indian warfare. The chariot was drawn by four horses and carried six men—one archer and shield bearer on each side besides two charioteers who were also men-at-arms; when the fighting was at close quarters, they dropped the reins and took part in the combat¹. Aelian says, however, that the chariot carried only two men beside the charioteer; this may have reference to chariots of smaller size. The same writer says that each elephant carried three archers besides the driver². According to Curtius, an image of Hercules was borne in front of the line of the Paurava's infantry in the battle of Jhelum, and this acted as the strongest of all incentives to make the soldiers fight well³.

20. Skill in arts.

Nearchus testifies to the ingenuity of Indians in works of art by citing their facility in the imitation of the sponges, curry-combs, oil-flasks and such other articles which they saw the Greeks using. Cloth was used for writing on. Copper was used fused but not wrought, with the result that vessels broke like earthenware if they fell to the ground. Prostration before kings and noblemen was unknown; only hands were raised in salutation⁴. According to one of Strabo's sources, it was a great occasion when the king washed his hair, and the courtiers vied with each other in sending costly presents; this seems to be a reference to the *abhisheka* of the king soon after his accession. In the processions at festivals many elephants

1. Curtius, viii, 14, (*Invasion*, p. 207).

2. Meg. *Frag.* XXXV, p. 90.

3. Curtius, *Ibid* (p. 208).

4. Strabo, XV, 1, 67 (p. 73). Curtius, viii, ch. 9, says that the tender side of the barks of trees received written characters like paper—*Invasion*, p. 186.

adorned with gold and silver were in the train, as well as four-horsed chariots and ox-waggons. There followed hosts of attendants in holiday attire carrying basins, goblets and other vessels of silver and gold some of them set with precious gems. Animals and birds also formed a feature. Kleitarchus mentioned four wheeled carriages carrying whole trees from which were suspended cages with tame birds of bright plumage and fine-song.¹

Peculiar usages

Onesicritus noted a number of usages peculiar to the kingdom of Musikanos in Sindh. They had a common meal which they ate in public as did the Lacedaemonians, their food consisting of the produce of the chase. They used neither gold nor silver though they had mines of these metals. They had no slaves and employed instead young men in the flower of their age, as the Cretans employed Aphamiotai and the Lacedaemonians the Helots. They studied no science but medicine with any care, for they regarded the excessive pursuit of any art, as war for instance, to be a wicked thing. They had no actions at law but for murder and outrage; in contracts and other matters of mutual trust, if one of the parties broke faith the other must endure it and blame himself for trusting the wrong man and not engross the attention of the citizens with his law-suits².

21. *Slaves*

Some of these statements particularly those relating to slavery and law-suits, were repeated by Megasthenes with a much wider application. His statement on slavery has been extracted by Diodorus, Arrian, and Strabo³; we may reproduce Arrian's as being the clearest and most complete of them; 'All the Indians are free, and not one of them is a slave. The Lakedaemonians and the Indians are so far in agreement. The Lakedaemonians, however, hold the Helots as slaves, and these

1. Strabo *Ibid.* 69 (pp. 75—6) King's washing his hair is interpreted *abhisheka* by Jayaswal, *JBORS*, II, p. 99.

2. Strabo *Ibid.*, 34 (p. 41).

3. Diod. II, 39 (p. 40): Arrian, *Indika*, X—*Frag.* xxvi (pp. 68—9 and 206—8): Strabo, XV; 1, 54 (p. 58).

do servile labour ; but the Indians do not even use aliens as slaves, and much less a countryman of their own.' To understand this statement in its proper sense, we should remember that Megasthenes had Onesicritus before him ; and we find him deliberately extending to all India a statement that his predecessor made particularly of one country visited by him, and equally deliberately correcting or contradicting him in regard to Helotry. Megasthenes says in effect, that there are no slaves in India as Onesicritus knew, but his comparison of the Indian servants to Helots is wrong, for the Helots were put to servile labour and were in fact slaves. Obviously Megasthenes is here thinking of slavery in its full legal and political implications according to which the slave was the chattel of his master with no rights of any kind whatsoever. And by a close study of the rules of the *Arthasāstra* on *dāsas* and *karmakaras*, serfs and hired labourers, Breloer has shown that *dāsas* were not slaves in this sense ; for they could not be employed in unclean work—servile labour as Megasthenes would call it, and they could hold and transmit property and regain their freedom by right under certain conditions. And this appears to be the correct meaning of the text before us. Megasthenes was neither misled by the mildness of Indian slavery into denying its existence, nor was he idealising Indian conditions for the edification of the Greeks, but simply stating and interpreting a fact as he saw and understood it, incidentally commenting on the view of another writer known to him¹.

22. Deposits

Regarding law-suits, Strabo is our only source of ascertaining what Megasthenes said, and he is known often to abridge his original very considerably. Strabo writes : 'The simplicity of their laws and their contracts is proved by the fact that they seldom go to law. They have no suits about pledges or deposits, nor do they require either seals or witnesses, but make

1. Breloer, *Kautalya Studien*, II, Pt. i, pp. 11—69. *Contra*. Stein, *Megasthenes und Kautilya*, pp. 109 ff. where the argument is built on the assumption *dāsa*-(Gk.) *doulos*—slave. J. J. Meyer has found fault with Breloer for assuming too much knowledge of Greek law on the part of Megasthenes, but his criticism carries no conviction to me. ZII, 7, pp. 194-204 and Breloer's rejoinder, pp. 205—32.

their deposits and confide in each other¹. This statement, which again follows the account of Nearchus, has been explained by Breloer on the assumption that the Greek writers were thinking of the elaborate Greek procedure regarding deposits which invariably needed a written document, six witnesses and a seal, and of the form of private suit (*dike*) in connection with such pledges and deposits. Witnesses and seals are, of course, known to Indian law, and the *Arthasāstra* is no exception here. But when there is a proper meaning that we can find for the statements we get at second hand, it would be well to accept it and acquit the Greek writers of misunderstanding Indian conditions or of idealising them².

✓ 23. *Seven classes of the people*

Perhaps the best known section of Megasthenes is his account of the seven 'tribes' or classes of India. They are : (1) The philosophers, (2) cultivators, (3) herdsmen and hunters, (4) artisans and traders, (5) fighters, (6) overseers (Ephors or *Episcopoi*) and (7) councillors and assessors³. Megasthenes, like Nearchus, mentions two types of Brahmins—those engaged in the study of nature and practice of religion, and those who took part in political life and advised the king as counsellors. Both these classes were numerically small, but highly respected for their learning and character. The class of philosophers included two types ; first the officiating priests (*purohitas*) who conducted religious ceremonials, public and private, in return for *dakshinā*, were exempt from labour and taxation, and predicted the fortunes of every year at its commencement ; then there were the ascetics (*sanyāsins*) who have been mentioned already. The seventh class provided the *mantrins*, the judges, treasurers and generals for the army. The second class of culti-

1. Strabo, XV, 1, 53 (p. 56)=Meg. *Frag.* xxvii (p. 70) Also *Frag.* xxvii B and C (p. 73).

2. Breloer, *op. cit.*, pt. ii, pp. 70—158. *Contra.* Stein, *op. cit.* pp. 204—5.

3. Diodorus, II, 40—41 (Meg. pp. 40—44); Arrian, *Indika*, XI—XII (pp. 208—13); Strabo, XV, 1, 39—41 and 46—49 (pp. 47—8 and 53). Also Diod. II, 36 (p. 33) for immunity of cultivators from ravages of war. Monahan, *Early History of Bengal*, p. 153, refutes Stein's doubts over this question.

vators formed the bulk of the population ; they were exempt from fighting and other services, devoted the whole of their time to tillage, and were of a mild and gentle disposition. They lived in the country and avoided towns as much as possible. In times of war, they were allowed to go about their occupation undisturbed by the surrounding conflict. In the words of Arrian : 'In times of civil war the soldiers are not allowed to molest the husbandmen or ravage their lands : hence, while the former are fighting and killing each other as they can, the latter may be seen close at hand tranquilly pursuing their work,—perhaps ploughing, or gathering in their crops, pruning the trees, or reaping the harvest.' This does not seem to be an idealised picture, but a matter of general practice and common knowledge in ancient India ; witness the telling simile in an old Buddhist commentary which says that philosophers while destroying the opinions of their adversaries must carefully respect the principles of logic which are useful to all, just as kings, while destroying the soldiers of their enemies, respect the field labourer who is the common help of both armies¹. The cultivators paid a determinate share of the produce to the state by way of rent² for the land they cultivated but did not own. On this important subject², we may set down the actual words of the Greek authors. Arrian says simply : 'they cultivate the soil and pay tribute to the kings and the independent cities'. Diodorus is more elaborate, but by no means more helpful ; he says : 'They pay a land-tribute to the king, because all India is the property of the Crown, and no private person is permitted to own land. Besides the land-tribute, they pay into the royal treasury a fourth part of the produce of the soil'. Lastly, Strabo has this : 'The whole of the land belongs to the Crown, and the husbandmen till it on condition of receiving as wages one-fourth of the produce.' We notice marked differences in these extracts from Megasthenes by the three writers. Arrian is silent on state ownership and says that the payment for land was of the same order in monarchies and in free cities (republics), which should

1. The citation is from *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*—see Breloer, i. p. 118, n. Also *IHQ*, ii, (1926), p. 656.

2. U. N. Ghosal, *Ownership of Land in Ancient India*, *IHQ*, ii (1926), pp. 198—203. Also *post* chapter on Mauryan Polity.

be deemed enough to silence all attempts to restrict the application of our texts to the royal domain ; Diodorus mentions the payment of a quarter share of the produce to the state *in addition* to the tribute, while Strabo says that three-fourths were given up to the state, only a quarter going to the cultivator as wages. It may well be doubted, whether these differences in the rate of land tax or rent may be properly explained as due to differences in the conditions under which cultivation was carried on under a sharing system, the landlord contributing only the land in some cases, but cattle, plough, manure and so on in different degrees in other instances. The *Arthaśāstra*, however, knows these differences, and Breloer has argued that the Mauryan polity was based on a close supervision and regulation of all agriculture and industry in the land by government agency¹. In Taxila alone soldiers outnumbered husbandmen, as the king was at war with two of his neighbours, as he told Alexander².

The *third* class, shepherds and hunters, lived a nomadic life in forests, cleared the land of wild beasts, birds that devour seeds sown, and other pests, received an allowance of corn from the king for the service, and paid him tribute in cattle. The *fourth* class of artisans and traders paid taxes from their earnings, except armourers and shipwrights who received subsidies. The *fifth* class, warriors, less numerous only than the cultivators lived a life of ease and enjoyment in peace; they received a handsome pay out of which they maintained all the servants they required for cleaning their arms, keeping their horses, driving their elephants and chariots and attending on them at home and in camp. The *sixth* class evidently includes both officials openly employed for the supervision of the work of the different departments, the *Mahāmātras* and *Adhyakshas*, and the numerous spies (assisted by the courtesans) who were engaged in the constant communication of secret information about all men and things to the king and, in republics, to the magistrates.

1. Breloer, *KS*, i, pp. 77—93 ; *contra*. Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 126—9.

2. 'When Alexander asked him whether he had more husbandmen or soldiers, he replied that as he was at war with two kings he required more soldiers than field labourers.' Curtius, viii, ch. 12 (*Invasion*, p. 202.).

24. *Marriage and occupation rules.*

Diodorus concludes his summary of this class-organisation with the following observations : 'Such, then, are about the parts into which the body politic of India is divided. No one is allowed to marry out of his own class, or to exercise any calling or art except his own : for instance, a soldier cannot become a husbandman or an artisan a philosopher.' Arrian has also similar remarks at the end with this addition : 'It is permitted that the sophist only be from any class ; for the life of the sophist is not an easy one, but the hardest of all.' By sophist of course an ascetic is meant here. Strabo also gives these restrictions regarding marriage and occupation, but adds that the philosophers are exempt from them on account of their superior merit. The stress laid on endogamy and the adherence to one's own occupation (*svadharma*), the only exception being in favour of the Brahmin, clearly indicate that Megasthenes did mean to describe the caste-system as we should now call it ; but these restrictions obviously had no meaning with reference to some of his classes, particularly the sixth and seventh¹. Either he did not hear of the theory of the four *varṇas*, or was carried away by a desire, natural in a Hellenistic Greek, to establish a similarity between Egypt and India in social organisation². Allowing for all its inaccuracies, there is still much in Megasthenes' picture that is true to reality and is borne out by Indian literary works including the *Arthasāstra*.

25. *Food and drink.*

The Indians, says Megasthenes, lived frugally, and, being simple in their manners, led happy lives. Their staple food was rice, and there was no common meal hour, each one taking

1. Breloer has argued that Megasthenes must have applied the term *mesos* to the classes, and used *genos* only in the statement on endogamy, that Diodorus and Strabo kept up this distinction, while Arrian has caused confusion by applying the term 'genos' to the Seven classes. In other words, the rule regarding endogamy is a piece of family law that stands apart from the division of the population into seven classes. *ZDMG*, 1934, p. 137. But I hesitate to accept this ingenious argument. Breloer has also sought to show on the strength of Pliny, VI, 19 (22) sec 66 and Solinus 52, 9 that Megasthenes made up his seven classes from the five of Taxila polity mentioned by an earlier writer, most probably Onesicritus, and that Herodotus' classes of Egypt had little to do with it. *Ibid* pp. 147-64.

2. 'The Egyptians are divided into seven distinct classes—these are the priests, the warriors, the cowherds, the swineherds, the tradesmen, the interpreters, and the boatmen'. Herodotus, II, 164.

his food by himself when he felt inclined ; 'the contrary custom would be better for the ends of social and civil life'¹. At supper a table was placed before each person and a golden bowl on it ; into this they first put boiled rice and then they added many dainties prepared in the Indian way². They drank wine only at sacrifices, at which they did not stab the victim, but strangled it in order that only what is entire may be offered to the deity.

26. *Crime and Punishment.*

Theft was of rare occurrence, and in Chandragupta's camp of 400,000 men, the thefts reported on any day did not exceed 200 drachmae (about Rs. 100)³. Love of finery and ornament was indulged in by those who could afford it. They had their bodies massaged by means of smooth rollers of ebony ; they wore robes worked in gold, ornaments set with precious stones, and flowered garments of the finest muslin. They married a number of wives, some for children and others for pleasure⁴. The code of punishments was severe, and threatened mutilation for bearing false witness, and death for causing the loss of the hand or eye of the artisan. In other cases of bodily injury, the offender not only paid the penalty according to *lex talionis* but had his hand cut off as well. Indians were peculiarly distinguished among the nations as lovers of dance and song ; they reared no costly monuments for the commemoration of the dead, but celebrated their virtues in song⁵.

27. *Pāṭalīputra*

India was a land of many towns, and Megasthenes was aware of the difference in administrative organisation between town

1. *Frag.* XXVII (pp. 69—70)=Strabo, XV, 1, 53—4 (pp. 55—8).

2. *Frag.* XXVIII (p. 74).

3. One sentence of Strabo is usually translated : 'Their houses and property are for the most part unguarded'. But Breloer questions the correctness of the text and holds that the last word should properly read 'guarded', implying a contrast between the stronger closed part of a house and its more open portions—a plan of house building imposed by the climate and prevailing even now. *KS*, ii, p. 9.

4. Purchase of wives from their parents in exchange for a yoke of oxen is mentioned in this context as a universal rule ; but this is surely due to some misunderstanding on the part of Megasthenes or Strabo. The prescription is known to Indian law-books and applies only to the *ārsha* form of marriage.

5. Arrian, *Anabasis*, vi, 3, (*Invasion*, p. 136), *Indika*, X (p. 204)=*Meg. Frag.* XXVI (pp. 67—8).

and country. Cities situated on the banks of rivers or on the sea coast were built of wood as they were liable to frequent damage from rain and flood, while those standing on commanding situations or lofty eminences were built of brick and mud. Pāṭalīputra at the confluence of the Ganges and the Son was the largest Indian city¹. The palace of Chandragupta, 'the greatest of all the kings of the country', far surpassed those of Susa and Ekbatana in its splendour and magnificence. In its parks were kept tame peacocks and pheasants. There were shady groves and meadows planted with trees the branches of which were cunningly interwoven by the art of the horticulturist. And the trees were kept ever green and never seemed to grow old or shed their leaves. Some were native to the soil, others brought from other lands with great care for their beauty, but the olive was not among them. Birds were there, not confined, but coming of their own accord and making their nests and forming lairs on the branches of the trees. Parrots were native to the land and were maintained in large numbers, as they were valued for their capacity to imitate human speech ; they often hovered in groups round about the king. In the palace grounds there were artificial ponds of great beauty filled with fish of enormous size but quite tame. No one had permission to catch them ; but the king's sons, when they were children, learned to fish and to swim at the same time in these tranquil ponds, learning also how to sail their boats².

1. *Meg. Frag.* XXV (pp. 66—7)=Strabo, XV, 1, 35—6 (pp. 42—4) : *Frag.* XXVI (pp. 68—9)=Arrian *Indika*, X (pp. 204—6). Also Pliny at *Meg.* p. 139. Details reproduced in Chapter on Chandragupta.

2. Aelian, XIII, Ch. 18 (*Anc. Ind. in Class. Lit.*, pp. 141—2). Curtius, viii, 9 on the King and the palace may be cited here for comparison: 'The luxury of their kings, or as they call it, their magnificence, is carried to a vicious excess without a parallel in the world. When the king condescends to show himself in public his attendants carry in their hands silver censers, and perfume with incense all the road by which it is his pleasure to be conveyed. He lolls in a golden palanquin, garnished with pearls, which dangle all round it, and he is robed in fine muslin embroidered with purple and gold. Behind his palanquin follow men-at-arms and his body-guards, of whom some carry boughs of trees, on which birds are perched trained to interrupt business with their cries. The palace is adorned with gilded pillars clasped all round by a vine embossed in gold, while silver images of those birds which most charm the eye diversify the workmanship. The palace is open to all comers even when the king is having his hair combed and dressed. It is then that he gives audience to ambassadors, and administers justice to his subjects. His slippers being after this taken off, his feet are rubbed with scented ointments. His principal exercise is hunting ; amid the vows and songs of his courtesans he shoots the

28. *Women in the Palace*

The king's personal wants were attended to by women. The bodyguards and soldiery were posted outside the palace gates. The statements that a woman who killed the king when drunk became the wife of his successor, and that the king might not sleep during day, and was obliged to change his couch often by night with a view to defeat plots against his life, must be treated as curious gossip rather than be accepted for facts as some writers do. On the other hand, the role of women in the personal service of the king is well attested in Indian literature, and Kautilya lays down many precautions to be observed as a routine for ensuring the personal comfort and safety of the king (*ātmarakshitakam*). The king spent much time outside his palace hearing and judging cases, and he did this even while he was being massaged. He went out for offering sacrifice, and for the chase. The hunting procession was a somewhat Bacchanalian display. 'Crowds of women surround him, and outside of this circle spear-men are ranged. The road is marked off with ropes, and it is death, for man and woman alike, to pass within the ropes. Men with drums and gongs lead the procession. The king hunts in the enclosures and shoots arrows from a platform. At his side stand two or three armed women. If he hunts in the open grounds he shoots from the back of an elephant. Of the women, some are in chariots, some on horses, and some even on elephants, and they are equipped with weapons of every kind as if they were going on a campaign¹. Curtius gives a more rhetorical account of the king and his doings.

game enclosed within the royal park. The arrows, which are two cubits long, are discharged with more effort than effect, for though the force of these missiles depends on their lightness they are loaded with an obnoxious weight. He rides on horse-back when making short journeys, but when bound on a distant expedition he rides in a chariot (howdah) mounted on elephants and, huge as these animals are, their bodies are covered completely over with trappings of gold. That no form of shameless profligacy may be wanting, he is accompanied by a long train of courtesans carried in golden palanquins and this troop holds a separate place in the procession from the queen's retinue, and is as sumptuously appointed. His food is prepared by women, who also serve him with wine, which is much used by all Indians. When the king falls into a drunken sleep his courtesans carry him away to his bedchamber, invoking the gods of the night in their native hymns" (*Invasion*, pp. 188—190).

1. *Meg. Frag.* XXVI (pp. 71—2)=Strabo, XV, 1, 53 (p. 58).

29. *Administration*

The administrative organisation of the Mauryan state is described by Megasthenes under three heads : (1) rural administration, (2) city administration and (3) military administration¹. The distinction between town and country for administrative purposes was well established in Indian polity, as is clear from the constant references to *paura* and *jānapada* in literature ; and as the Mauryan empire was the nearest approach to a war-state ever attained in India, army administration attracted the special attention of an observer of the type of Megasthenes. The picture he presents is that of a highly organised and efficient bureaucracy engaged in regulating activities in almost every important sphere of national life.

The officials of the rural branch so to say, to whom Megasthenes applied the general designation *agronomoi*, supervised irrigation and land-measurement, hunting and enforcement of forest laws and all the occupations connected with agriculture mining, carpentry and metal industries. They also collected taxes and maintained the roads, setting up mile-stones indicating distances at every ten stades (a little over a mile). This seems to be a summary account of the duties of a large number of officials rather than of the activities of a single board².

Those in charge of the city (the *astynomoi*) were divided into six bodies of five each. Their functions were respectively (1) supervision of industrial establishments ; (2) care of foreigners including provision of lodging and assistants who would watch their doings, attention to sick persons and burying the dead³ ; (3) census of population and property ; (4) control of trade

1. Meg. Frag. XXXIV (pp. 86—9)—Strabo XV, 1, 50—2 (pp. 53—5). McCrindle's translation saying that the first class of officers 'have charge of the market' is now seen to be a mistake due to the word *agroronomoi* having somehow crept into Strabo's text in the place of *agronomoi* which is obviously required by the context. Cf. Stein, *Op. cit.*, pp. 233—4. Monahan *Early History of Bengal*, pp. 160—61, traces analogies in detail between Megasthenes and Kauṭilya in the administrative organisation of town and country.

2. *Contra* Stein, *Op. cit.*, p. 235.

3. Cf. Meg. Frag. I—Diod. II, 42 (pp. 44—5). 'Among the Indians officers are appointed even for foreigners, whose duty is to see that no foreigner is wronged. Should any of them lose his health, they send physicians to attend him, and take care of him otherwise, and if he dies they bury him, and deliver over such property as he leaves to his relatives. The judges also decide cases in which foreigners are concerned, with the greatest care, and come down sharply on those who take unfair advantage of them.'

and commerce, regulation of weights and measures, and marking with the official stamp articles passed for sale¹, no one being allowed to deal in more than one commodity except on payment of a double-tax ; (5) similar duties regarding manufactured goods, the traders being required strictly not to mix new goods with old ; (6) collection of the tax of ten per cent on sales, the penalty for evasion being death. The six bodies acted together in general matters like the maintenance of public buildings, regulation of prices, and care of markets, harbours and temples.

This account of city-government does not correspond *prima facie* to anything known from Indian sources. It has been pointed out² rightly that while in the pages of the *Arthasāstra* we come across individual officials in charge of more or less the same duties as are discharged by some of the boards of Megasthenes' account, there is no trace whatever of a body of thirty dividing into six pentads ; and as the same arrangement recurs in his description of military administration, it has been suggested that Megasthenes gave a schematic and idealised account far removed from realities. On the other hand, urban administration has always been different from rural, and there is evidence that at the time of Alexander's invasion some of the larger cities had an administrative system very like what Megasthenes has detailed. Thirty deputies from Nysa accompanied Akouphis on his visit to Alexander ; and, 'from the Oxydrakai came the leading men of their cities, and their provincial governors, besides 150 of their most eminent men, entrusted with full powers to conclude a treaty³'. It is possible that in these republican cities, the entire aristocracy had a voice in government and the executive work was carried on by groups of five ; for the *pañchāyat* is after all a very widespread Indo-Aryan institution⁴. The rise of the Mauryan empire did bring about a considerable change, and it is possible that Megasthenes was either not fully abreast of the new situation, or probably his account is coloured by his knowledge of the historians of Alexander.

1. I follow here Smith's correction of McCrindle—See *Aśoka* (3rd edn.) p. 88, n. 1.

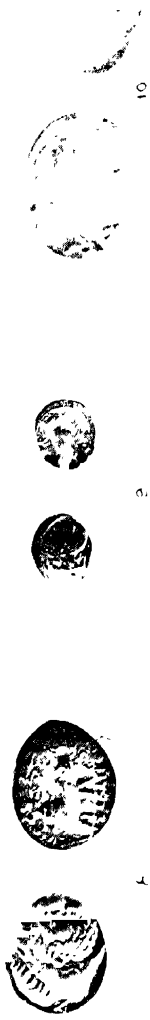
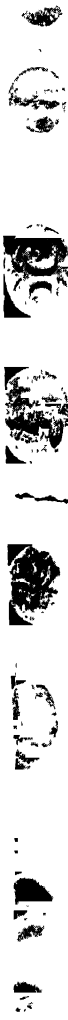
2. Stein, *Op. cit.*, pp. 248—66).

3. Arrian, *Anabasis*, V, 1 (*Invasion*, p. 79) : ib. vi, 14 (p. 154).

4. Brelocr, *ZDMG*, 1935, pp. 61—7.

Lastly the war office comprised a board of thirty, functioning in six divisions of five members each. The first division was the admiralty ; the second, transport and commissariat providing, among other things, servants to beat the drum, and groom the horses, and mechanists to tend the machines; the remaining four were respectively in charge of infantry, cavalry, war-chariots and the elephants. There were royal stables for the horses and elephants and an arsenal for the arms, 'because the soldier has to return his arms to the magazine, and his horse and his elephant to the stables'. Horses were broken in by professional trainers forcing them to gallop round and round in a ring, especially when they saw them refractory ; the *Arthaśāstra* devotes whole sections to a description of the movements to which the war horses and elephants should be trained, besides describing their proper care in considerable detail¹.

1. Meg. Frag. XXXV (p. 89). AS. ii, 30—31.



Key to Plate I

First Row :

1. Gold daric
2. Silver shekel
3. Gold double daric (p. 124)
4. Coin of Philip Arideaus from Taxila (p. 125)

Second Row :

5. Silver decadrachm (pp. 125-6)
6. Coin of Alexander from Taxila (p. 125)
7. Attic tetradrachm, silver, imitation (p. 128)

Third Row :

8. Seleucus I, silver Attic tetradrachm Zeus/Athene
(p. 129)
9. Sophytes, silver (p. 126-7)
10. Diodotus II, silver, Attic tetradrachm (P.130)

— Fourth Row :

11. Euthydemus I, silver Attic tetradrachm (p.130)
12. Seleucus I, silver, Horse/Elephant (p .129)

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III

EARLY FOREIGN COINS IN INDIA

(*Nanda-Maurya Period*)

The coins current in India before her contact with the Greeks were of the variety usually described as punch-marked and cast¹. Their manufacturing technique widely differed from that of the Greek coins, and it has been almost unanimously accepted that it was invented by the early Indian moneyers, without the aid of any outside influence². Though numismatists differ about the earliest date of the circulation of these indigenous coins, there is no doubt now that many of them passed current during the Nanda-Maurya period, being introduced in India at a much earlier time. Other types of coins which also passed as currency in the extreme north of India during this period were those issued by the Achaemenid Persian rulers of this region. The Persian emperors from Darius I onwards usually struck two types of coins, viz., the darics and the sigloi, the former being of gold and the latter of silver. The name 'daric' is evidently derived from that of Darius Hystaspes whose Indian conquests included the whole of the Indus valley while

1. The name 'punch-marked' is given to a large mass of early Indian coins, mostly in silver and comparatively infrequently in copper, on account of the various symbols being punched on metal blanks of different shapes, sizes and weights. It was at first suggested by numismatists that these coins were private issues, various moneyers or shroffs being held responsible for their manufacture: according to this view the symbols on their surface were nothing more than the hall-marks of the different individuals through whose hands the coins passed in the course of trade and commerce. But this view has given place to the more probable one of their having been issued by a central authority. Uninscribed cast copper pieces bearing such symbols as elephant, tree in railing, mountain &c., are some of the commonest coins of ancient India, and belong probably to the same period in which the punch-marked coins are to be dated. For a full treatment of these varieties of the earliest indigenous coins of India, the reader is referred to J. Allan's *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India*, Introduction, parts ii-iv.

2. M. Decourdemanche, however, was of opinion that most, if not all, of the punch-marked coins belong to the Achaemenid monetary system, these being nothing but a variety of the Indian issues of the Achaemenid Persian emperors: *Journal Asiatique*, 1912, pp. 117-132. D.R. Bhandarkar opposes this view; cf. *Carmichael Lectures*, 1921, pp. 118-22. J. Allan thinks that the thick silver bent bars with devices on their concave side, found in some parts of north-western India, 'are struck on a Persian standard and represent double sigloi or staters, half and quarter sigloi, *CAI.* p. xvi, 1-3.

'siglos' is based on 'shekel', a kind of weight standard adopted by the Persians from the ancient Babylonians. On the obverse of the former, the Persian emperor armed with a bow and a spear is shown in a running posture, while the reverse contains an irregular oblong incuse. The Persian silver coins bear almost identical devices, but several of them have peculiar countermarks both on the obverse and the reverse, which according to some scholars emphasise their definite Indian association¹. The darics are about 130 grains (8.42 grammes) in weight, while the maximum weight of the sigloi, twenty of which were equal in value to a daric, was 86.45 grains (5.6 grammes). It was previously held that both these varieties of silver and gold Persian coins were actually minted in India, and passed current there side by side. But a more acceptable suggestion has been made not very long ago that the relative cheapness of gold in this country would make it uneconomical for the Persians to mint any gold coins here for circulation ; in fact, it would tend to draw outside the country any darics which might have been brought there in course of trade and commerce². This view has been supported by the non-discovery of the darics here in any quantity, and the comparative frequency of sigloi in the Indian soil.

No coins of any Greek prince, however, could have been in circulation in India before Alexander invaded the country. It is presumed that even during the period of his short stay there in the course of his conquests in the north-western regions, he could hardly have found any time to issue coins in his newly-acquired territories. A copper coin of squarish shape bearing the name of Alexander, which was supposed at first to be his Indian issue, has been long since declared to have no connection with

1. Rapson held this view; he recognised some symbols thus counter-marked as similar to those found on Indian punch-marked coins, and other marks he explained as resembling several Brāhmī and Kharoshthī letters: *JRAS.* 1895, pp. 865. ff. E. Babelon attributed these countermarks to other countries of Asia, such as, Lycia, Pamphylia, Cilicia and Cyprus; *Les Perses Achéménides* p. xi. G. Macdonald says 'that the results of the most recent investigation (Hill, *JHS.* 1919, pp. 125 ff.) rather tend to bear out his opinion' though he does not ignore the noteworthy similarity between them and the Indian punchmarks; *CHI.* I, 344.

2. *CHI.* I, 342—43. The ratio between gold and silver in India as we know from Herodotus, 'was not higher than 1:8' as compared with the form of 1: 13. 3 maintained by the Imperial mint'.

India¹. But two silver coins (tetradrachms) bearing the name of Alexander and one silver coin, that of Philip Aridaeus, were discovered by Marshall in the course of his excavations at the Bhir Mound site Taxila². These coins 'bear on the obverse head of Alexander wearing the lion skin, and on the reverse Zeus seated on a throne with the eagle on his right hand and the sceptre in left'. Though they have different legends and monograms, they are closely similar to one another. On one of the coins of Alexander, the legend $BA\Sigma I\Lambda E\cap\Sigma A\Lambda E\equiv AN\Delta POY$ can be distinctly read. Their freshly-minted condition and the fact that they were recovered from a stratum, assigned by Marshall to the 3rd or 4th Century B.C., may lead one to suppose that they were actually minted in India. But this first recorded find of such coins in India is still unique and the coins could have been brought here from outside.

The troubles which Alexander's officers left in charge of his Indian conquests had to encounter in maintaining their transitory hold on these regions did not allow them to issue coins in any number in the name of their master³. But a few interesting coins of Greek technique belonging to the latter half of the 4th century B.C. have been discovered, which, though all of them were not found in India, seem to have Indian association. Among them mention may be made first of the few unique silver decadrachms issued by Alexander himself from his Babylonian mint, which were distinctly of a commemorative character. The obverse shows an elephant with two riders followed by a warrior on a prancing horse, while the reverse

1. P. Gardner thought that there were a few such pieces of Alexander's Indian money: *BMC*. xviii. But really the piece, now in the collection of the Berlin Museum, is unique. The shape which is the only reason for associating it with India might have been an accidental freak, 'the result of awkward handling by some workman at a western mint'. Macdonald refers to a group of tetradrachms with Zeus' head on the obverse and the eagle on a thunderbolt accompanied by the legend $A\Lambda E\equiv AN\Delta POY$ on the reverse, as having some connection with the east, if not actually with India: *CHI*. I 388-89. The presence of a satrapal tiara on the right field of the reverse sides of these coins proves that they were satrapal issues.

2. *ASR*. 1924-25, pp 47-8, pl. ix. These coins were found in a small earthen jar which also contained as many as 1167 silver punch-marked and bent-bar-type of Indian coins, and one Persian siglos.

3. Macdonald's description of a few such imitations of the Athenian 'owls' which might have been minted in the extreme north-west of India, may be noted in this connection: *CHI*. I, 388. They are the same as referred to in the previous foot note.

contains the standing figure of Alexander shown as the god Zeus. The obverse device has been explained by numismatists as the artist's version of Alexander's battle with Porus, the Macedonian emperor on horseback attacking with his lance Porus riding on the elephant, while a second person, the driver of the elephant, turns to throw a javelin at the pursuer. The reverse depicts Alexander dressed in a Macedonian cloak with a composite helmet on his head, his right hand holding a thunderbolt and his left a spear ; Nike is shown in the top left field, about to place a wreath on his head. The monogram on the lower left field of the reverse is AB which may either stand for $\text{BA}\Sigma\text{I}\wedge\text{E}\cap\Sigma\text{A}\wedge\text{E}\equiv\text{AN}\Delta\text{POY}$, or may more probably be a contraction for Babylon, one of the mint cities of Alexander. The other class of silver coins which are usually supposed to have been minted in India, were the issues of one Sophytes, as we know from their legend on the reverse. This Sophytes has so long been identified with Sopeithes of Arrian (vi, 2, 2) and Strabo (xv. 699), who ruled over territories in the Salt Range region, Punjab, at the time of Alexander's invasion. Sopeithes appears to have been the Greek form of the Indian name Saubhūti who according to most scholars was an Indian¹. But R.B. Whitehead questioned the identity of Sophytes and Sopeithes not very long ago. He further suggested that Sophytes was an eastern satrap in the last quarter of the fourth Century B.C. ruling somewhere in the Oxus region, where his coins were originally minted—(*Numismatic Chronicle*, 1943). It is true that there is no record of an actual discovery of any of these coins in Indian soil, but there is also no clear proof of Sophytes' connection with the Oxus region. Arrian and Strabo are explicit about the existence of one Sopeithes (most probably the Greek transliteration of some such Indian name as Saubhūti) and it is tempting to connect it with the name Sophytes, the issuer of the coins in question (JNSI VII, pp. 23—6). The obverse of these coins shows the head of the king to right within dotted border, wearing close-fitting helmet and cheek-plate, the former adorned with a wreath of olive leaves ; on the reverse

1. D. R. Bhandarkar attempts to prove that Sophytes was really a Hinduised Greek; for his arguments, cf. *CL*. 1921, pp. 30—1.

is shown a cock to right with a caduceus on the left field and the Greek legend $\Sigma\Omega\phi\Upsilon\text{TOY}$ on the right, all inside a border of dots. The coins are struck from regularly adjusted dies ($\downarrow \uparrow$) and usually bear a monogram consisting of the Greek letter M or MN; their approximate weight is 58 grains. These coins are of great interest as they are without doubt based on the imitations of the Athenian 'owls' which seem to have been somewhat familiar in or just outside the north-western border of India at that time. The discovery of a unique tri-hemiobol, now in the Berlin Museum, bearing the helmeted head of Athena in place of that of Sophytes, apart from most other numismatic features, definitely proves the connection between the two sets of coins. The weight of Sophytes' coins, which according to earlier numismatists was derived from the Indian *dharāṇa* or *purāṇa* (silver punch-marked coins weighing 32 ratis, roughly 58 grains) has now been shown by Macdonald and others to be the same as that of the imitations; it has been described as a lighter Attic standard sometimes adopted by moneyers in their issue of such coins in the east¹. As Sophytes does not use any royal title on his coins, it has been presumed that his coins were issued not long after Alexander's invasion, when, though for all intents and purposes enjoying sovereign rights, he might have acknowledged temporarily the authority of the Greek invader². An earlier view regarding the prototype of Sophytes' coins, not even completely abandoned now, is that they were imitated from a certain type of Seleucus' coins; in fact such was the close similarity between the obverse of this issue of Seleucus I and that of the coins of Sophytes, that some numismatists were tempted to connect the two sets of coins in this manner. It is more correct to accept the view suggested by Rapson long ago that both were derived from the imitations of the Athenian

1. But this so-called lighter Attic weight might have been influenced by the Indian *dharāṇa* or *purāṇa* standard after all. It is the smaller denominations of the imitations of the Athenian 'owls' procured in the regions near the extreme north-west border of India, which are usually based on the 58 grains standard which is also the weight of a large mass of silver punch-marked coins.

2. D. R. Bhandarkar is of opinion that these coins of Sophytes could have been issued neither during the period of Alexander's stay in India, nor at a time subsequent to his departure from there; according to him, they were issued before Alexander invaded India, *CL.* 1921, p. 30.

'owls'¹. But if Whitehead's suggestion that Sophytes was an eastern Satrap ruling somewhere in the Oxus region in c. 320 B.C. is correct, then these coins had no Indian connection.

It will be of interest now to study in brief the special features of these imitations of owls, some of which according to most numismatists were actually minted in the extreme north-west of India or just outside. The original 'owls' of Athens were beautifully executed silver coins of various denominations usually tetradrachms, which bore on the obverse the head of Pallas Athene, the tutelary deity of the city, and on the reverse the figure of an owl, the bird sacred to the goddess, with the legend ΑΘΕ usually in the right field. These coins were so much in demand among the people of the Aegean world and among those of the middle and near east, that Athens had to supply the specie from her own mint. When Athens lost her political importance as a result of her debacle in the Peloponnesian War and the subsequent Macedonian hegemony, her mint was closed, and imitations of the above type of the Athenian coins were made in large numbers in the countries which once used to import the Athenian originals. These imitations can be divided into two well-defined classes, the first closely approximating to its prototype. The second class softer in style usually bear the monogram Μ behind the head of Athene on the obverse and a bunch of grapes over the back of the bird on the reverse. The most characteristic feature which, however, distinguishes the second class from the first is that the obverse and reverse devices of the former are finely adjusted (↓ ↑), whereas in the case of the latter no such adjustment seems to have been made; this nice fixity of position of one die in relation to that of the other may point 'to the employment of a hinge or of some equally effective contrivance' (Macdonald). Moreover, the first class usually consists of tetradrachms, while the second also contains drachms and didrachms. These smaller denominations, again, are not based like the higher ones on the Attic standard of weight, a drachm according to which weighed 67.2

1. P. Gardner (*BMC*. p. xx) and several other older numismatists held the view; it has also been supported by C. Seltman in his *Greek Coins*, pp. 228—29, pl. LII. 3, and pl. LV.6. But Rapson correctly suggested long ago that 'both of these classes may have been derived from the same originals—the imitations of the Athenian coins made in India; *IC*. p. 4.

grains (4.37 grammes), but on one in which the same would weigh no more than 58 grains (3.75 grammes). These numismatic peculiarities of the second class of the imitations place them alongside 'another set of drachms and diobols which are struck from regularly adjusted dies ($\psi \uparrow$), but in which the place of the Athenian owl is taken by an eagle, looking backwards' (Macdonald). On this latter class of coins, the bunch of grapes behind the owl's back is in one case accompanied by a caduceus. These latter sets of the imitation of the Athenian 'owls' were undoubtedly the prototype of Sophytes' coin discussed above, and this is one of the principal reasons which have led numismatists to infer that 'at least the smaller Athenian imitations were not unfamiliar in the north of India'¹.

Several Greek coins² issued in Syria and in the adjacent countries to its east, some bearing the name of Seleucus I and others those of Seleucus I and his son Antiochus I jointly require a brief notice here on account of their Indian association of a somewhat remote character. The first group of these have on the obverse the head of a horned horse to right inside a dotted border, while their reverse shows an Indian elephant. Another class of coins in the same series bear a laureate head of Zeus on the obverse and Pallas Athene driving in a chariot drawn by four elephants on the reverse. The Greek legend $\text{BA}\Sigma\text{I}\wedge\text{E}\cap\Sigma\ \Sigma\text{E}\wedge\text{EYKOY}$ on the reverse side of both the classes proves that they were issued after 306 B.C. when Seleucus I assumed the royal title for the first time. A few of the latter class of coins, coarser in style and execution, are usually collected from the extreme north and north-west of India, showing thereby that though they were not actually minted in India, they might have been in circulation in this region. The other group of Greek coins, more or less similar in type to the second class of such coins just noticed,—on the reverse is shown a fighting Athena riding in a car drawn by either two or four elephants, bear the Greek legend $\text{BA}\Sigma\text{I}\wedge\text{E}\cap\Sigma\ \Sigma\text{E}\wedge\text{EYKOY KAI ANTIOXOY}$. The elephant device in all the above types of coins seems to have some remote connection

1. *CHI.* I, 387—88.

2. These are usually tetradrachms; coins of lesser denominations, however, are not unknown.

with one of the terms of the treaty concluded by Seleucus I with Chandragupta Maurya ; according to it the former bartered away the provinces of Paropanisus, Aria, Arachosia and Gedrosia along with his claims to the Punjab and other Greek conquests in northern India for five hundred war elephants. This particular war arm proved so decisivę a factor at the battle of Ipsus where Antigonus the formidable rival of Seleucus was overthrown, that it became one of the favourite dynastic devices of the Seleucidae. The head of a horned horse, another favourite device of the same, was perhaps commemorative of Bucephalus, the famous charger of Alexander the Great, in whose honour the Macdonian emperor founded a city named Bucephala on the bank of the Jhelum in the Punjab.

Most of the Greek coins discussed above are extra-Indian in character, from the point of view of their provenance ; but almost all of them have some association, near or remote, with the country. The hoards of Greek coins, however, that were actually minted here and which passed as currency in the extreme north and north-west were the ones issued by the Greek rulers of Bactria and India. These Bactrian Greeks at first owed allegiance to Seleucus I and his successors, and it was under Antiochus Theos (Antiochus II), the grandson of Seleucus I, that one Diodotus, the Greek satrap of Bactria, threw off the Syrian yoke sometime in the middle of the third century B.C. Justin says that this Diodotus died shortly after the assumption of independence and was succeeded by his son of the same name. The second Diodotus issued coins bearing his name and the device of Antiochus II. But these coins as well as those of Euthydemus I who dispossessed him of the throne of Bactria, were all issued outside India. The coins of the immediate successors of Euthydemus I, viz., Demetrius and others were mostly non-Indian issues ; a few of them were, however, actually minted in this country, when Demetrius carried the Bactrian Greek arms into India and conquered some parts of it. Eucratides who was a supplanter of Demetrius in Bactria and the head of a rival branch of the Greek princelings contending with Demetrius' successors for possessions in the extreme north and north-west of India, issued a large number of coins many of which were of Indian origin. The coins of the

host of the Indo-Greek rulers, mostly belonging either to the house of Euthydemus I or to that of Eucratides, were all minted here, because these Greek princes who had long been driven out of Bactria by the Sakas had made their home in India. The story, however, of these Bactrian and Indo-Greek princes and their coins, though beginning in the latter part of the Maurya age, really falls within the Śūnga and Kāṇva periods.

CHAPTER IV

CHANDRAGUPTA AND BINDUSARA

In a previous chapter we traced the expansion and consolidation of the Magadhan empire under the Nandas. The New Monarchy was exposed to a two-fold danger. On the one hand there were symptoms of popular disaffection with the regime which did not augur well for the future. Besides this there appeared on the north-western horizon the spectre of foreign dominion. Alexander, it is true, had to retire from the Beas but his "successors" inherited his ambition and some of his plans. The lament was no doubt heard that the pursuit of Alexander's policy and retention of his conquests required "royal troops under the command of some distinguished general"¹. Neither of these conditions could be fulfilled for some time after Alexander's death. The Macedonian Regents² from 323 to 317 B.C. had to be content with a sort of condominium on the Indian borderland. It did not, however, take long to consolidate the *Yavana* forces in Western Asia under a new leader so that Indians had once more to prepare themselves for their fiery onset.

Many of the prominent figures that strutted on the Indian stage in the twenties of the fourth century B.C.—Agrammes, Āmbhi, Porus, to name only a few—did not show any proper realisation of the problems that faced their country, or the destiny that awaited her. To preserve and augment the nascent empire of Magadha, to deal effectively with the foreign menace, to "unify the innumerable fragments of distracted India" and bring the ideal of the *Chakravartin* into the realm of practical politics, to inspire Indians with a zeal for mighty endeavour in

1. McCrindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, pp. 201—2.

2. It is an interesting question whether Macedon, the home of Alexander and many of his "successors", was known to Indians. The *Adina-punyāvādāna* (No. 52) of the *Avadāna-kalpalatā* of Kshemendra refers to a city styled Madhuka in the published Sanskrit text. The name is however given as Māshūdāna in the Bengali version by Mr. S. C. Das. The second name, if authentic, may be reminiscent of Macedon.

various fields of activity and bring her politically and socially into close touch with the outer world—all this required a man of heroic proportions. Such a man did not take long in coming. If Plutarch and Justin are to be believed there appeared before Alexander in the Punjab (326—25 B.C.) a 'stripling'¹ of humble birth about whom tradition records signs and portents significant of an august destiny². He conceived the grand design of reversing the condition of things that must have filled the mass of his countrymen with despair. For nearly a quarter of a century he did stride the Indian world like a colossus. For generations the country had to follow in the lines laid down for her by Chandragupta.

The success of the new Indian leader has been immortalised by a grateful posterity. Fragments of the cycle of legends of which he is the hero survive even in the works of Latin historians. In our own country we have lauds, tales, plays, even philosophical dissertations in Sanskrit, Pali, and Prākṛit in which writers eulogise the hero in whose arms the earth harassed by barbarians found a refuge, who nearly succeeded in bringing about the unification of "Jambudvīpa". Unfortunately very little is recorded about the life and career of this remarkable man, which bears the stamp of unassailable authenticity. One searches in vain for his very name in the inscriptions of his grandson. The *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali has interesting references to *Chandraguptasabhā*³ and to Amitraghāta⁴, possibly the son of Chandragupta, but records nothing about the deeds of the earliest of the Mauryas. Much that is known about him belongs to the domain of folklore. A *Chandraguptakathā*—the nucleus of *Chāṇakya-Chandragupta-kathā* of mediaeval times—must have come into existence before the beginning of the Christian era, as is apparent from the marvellous episodes that have found their way into the narrative of Justin who abridged the Latin history of Pompeius Trogus, a contem-

1. *Plutarch's Lives* (Loeb), Vol. VII, Life of Alexander, Chap. 62 ; p. 403 ; McCrindle, *Invasion of Alexander*, p. 311 for Plutarch ; p. 327 for Justin.

2. Cf. *bāla eva hi lokena sambhāvitamahodayaḥ* ; in *Mudrārākshasa* (ed. by Haridās Siddhāntabāgis-Bhattachārya), p. 452 ; *Parīśiṣṭa Parvan* (ed. by Jacobi, 2nd Ed.), VIII. 243 ; also Justin McCrindle *Invasion*, p. 327.

3. I. 1.9.

4. III. 2. 2.

porary of Augustus. Fragments of the story have also been preserved by the Buddhists in the *Milinda-Pāñho* and the *Theragāthā Commentary*¹ and by the Jains in certain mediaeval epigraphs of Mysore besides other documents. Curiously enough Chandragupta is ignored in the *Asokāvadāna* though we have notice of his son Bindusāra. The Tamilian reference to "Vamba Moriyār" may also have been connected with the Chandragupta saga. Fuller details are given in Hemachandra's *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, the *Mahāvamśa Tika*, Burmese legends² and the Kashmirian versions of the *Bṛihat-Kathā*. There is a dramatic rendering of one form of the legend by Viśākhadatta. The central theme of the story is hinted at in the *Chaṇḍakauśika*³. Certain additional details are found in the commentary on the *Vishṇu Purāṇa* and that of Dhunḍirāja on the *Mudrārākshasa* of Viśākhadatta.

To narrate the true story of Chandragupta one cannot rely entirely on the *Kathā* but has to piece together scraps of information obtainable from inscriptions, classical sources, genealogical lists preserved in Indian and Cylonese chronicles and certain incidental notices.

The epigraphic records of Aśoka and Daśaratha, while of value as a source of information regarding spiritual ideals, state of religion, internal organisation and social life in the early Maurya epoch, do not mention specific events that may be referred with precision to the reign of either Chandragupta or his son Bindusāra. Far different in character is the Junagadh Rock inscription of Rudradāman which not only specifically names the first Maurya but affords an interesting glimpse of the extent of his conquests and methods of administration. For fuller notices of Chandragupta's career we have, however, to turn to Greek and Latin writers of the Hellenistic period and the early centuries of Imperial Rome. Among classical sources an important place should be given to notices of friendly intercourse between the first two Mauryas and their Syrian contemporaries for which we are indebted to Athenaeus who quotes from Phylarchus and Hegesander⁴. There was an exchange of

1. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, I, 846.
2. Bigandet, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama II*, 12 ff.
3. Quoted in the *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* (3rd ed.), p. XIII.
4. McCrindle, *Invasion*, pp. 405, 409 n.

embassies as well as correspondence between the Indian and certain Hellenistic courts. The names of three of the Hellenic envoys have survived, namely, Megasthenes, Daimachus and Dionysius. As is well known the *Indika* of Megasthenes constitutes in some respects the most valuable source of information regarding Chandragupta and his times. But the fragments that survive in the books of Diodorus, Strabo, Arrian, Pliny and others throw more light on internal government and manners and customs of the people than on the political transactions of the age. For the events that followed the death of Alexander and led up to the rise and expansion of the Maurya empire reliance has to be placed mainly on the XVIII and XIX Books of the *Universal History (Bibliotheke)* of Diodorus Siculus, the *Life of Alexander* by Plutarch, Justin's *Epitome of the Historiā Philippicæ* of Pompeius Trogus (Book XV), the *Syriacæ* of Appian (Book XI. 9.55) and certain passages from the *Geography* of Strabo and the *Natural History* of Pliny. The Purāṇic and Ceylonese chronicles have nothing to say regarding Chandragupta's relation with the Hellenic powers. But they notice the dynastic change in Magadha and give information regarding the king's lineage not known from classical sources. The Chroniclers whose extant works cannot be dated earlier than the Gupta Age could not escape from the influence of the *Chāṇakya-Chandragupta-Kathā* which must have reached a highly developed form in their days. In their accounts the figure of Kauṭilya, unknown to earlier texts, makes its appearance as that of the leading actor in the drama of events that leads to the supersession of the Nandas by Chandragupta. This is in striking contrast with the facts recorded by Justin, following Trogus, according to which Chandragupta plays the leading role in the dynastic revolution among Indians and Kauṭilya is not even alluded to.

Among the sources of the Maurya period mention is often made of the *Kauṭilya-Arthaśāstra*. The copious information obtainable from this work relates more to ideals and methods of administration, social life etc., than to external political facts; it is also a matter of controversy how far the famous treatise can be regarded as a genuine product of the Maurya Age.

Before we proceed to sketch the life and career of Chandragupta on the basis of the sources indicated above, it may not

be out of place to say a few words about the vexed question of chronology.

Attempts have been made to determine the chronology of the Mauryas in general, and Chandragupta in particular, with the help of Jain and Buddhist tradition. Hemachandra informs us in the *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*¹ that the accession of Chandragupta took place 155 years after the liberation of Mahāvīra. This statement is confirmed by Bhadrēśvara in his *Kahāvālī*.² Meru-
tuṅga, however, in his *Vichārasreṇī*³ refers to other sources which place the event 60 years later in 215 A.V. Apart from the lack of unanimity among these Jain writers, the date of Mahāvīra's liberation is itself a matter of controversy, and it is not safe to build a chronological edifice on such foundations. The memorial verses quoted by Merutuṅga give other details which put the interval between the accession of Chandragupta and the end of Śāka rule and the foundation of Vikrama era at 255 years⁴. This would place the accession of the first Maurya in 313 B. C.—a result that closely approximates the epoch of the Seleucidan era, and has, therefore, found favour with some scholars. It should, however, be noted that the Jain writers are apparently referring to Chandragupta's rule in Avanti, and not Magadha or the Punjab, and that part of the chronological tradition embodied in the memorial verses is contradicted by Bhadrēśvara and Hemachandra. Moreover, the date 313 B.C. for Chandragupta does not accord with Buddhist tradition which puts his accession 162 years after the *Parinirvāṇa* of the Śākya Sage, that is, 382 B.C., if we accept the Ceylonese epoch (544 B.C.) of the Great Decease, and 324 B.C., if we prefer the Cantonese tradition (486 B.C.) for the passing away of the Enlightened One. The earlier date is no doubt opposed to classical evidence, but the date 324 B.C. is not irreconcilable with the testimony of Greek and Latin writers. The figures given by Buddhist chroniclers are, however, as much open to comment as the data of Bhadrēśvara, Hemachandra and Merutuṅga. We have, therefore, to turn to the clues furnished by

1. Ed. Jacobi p. xx ; Text, VIII. 339.
2. *Ibid.* p. xx.
3. *Ibid.* p. xx.
4. Ind. Ant. 1914 pp. 118 f. Jacobi, *Kalpasūtra of Bhadrabāhu*, Leipzig, 1879, p. 7 :

classical accounts supplemented by the testimony of Aśokan inscriptions.

The classical writers refer to several famous episodes in the career of Chandragupta with hints as to their chronological sequence. He met Alexander while yet a 'stripling' and not yet 'called to royalty' (326—25 B.C.)¹ and mounted the throne of India 'not long afterwards'² by instigating the Indians to overthrow the existing government, or according to another interpretation, soliciting the Indians to support his new sovereignty³; *thereafter*⁴ he prepared to attack Alexander's prefects; the latter were put to death and the yoke of servitude was shaken off from the neck of India 'after Alexander's death' (i.e., after 323 B.C.).⁵ Chandragupta was reigning over India when Seleucus was laying the foundation of his future greatness.⁶ (The famous Macedonian general acquired the satrapy of Babylon for the first time in 321 B.C., regained control of the city and founded an era in 312 B.C., and assumed the title of king in 306-5 B.C.). After subduing the Bactrians he passed over into India, concluded a treaty with Chandragupta and then returned home to prosecute the war with Antigonos (before 301 B.C.).⁷ Appian, who also refers to the war which Seleucus waged with Chandragupta, besides other events, mentions the understanding with the Indian

1. Plutarch, *Op. cit.* Ch. LXII. (Loeb Classical Library), translated by Perrin; Justin, *Inv. Alex.* p. 327.

2. Plutarch; *op. cit.* LXII, p. 401.

3. Justin, *Inv. Alex.*, p. 328; Watson's translation of Justin, p. 142.

4. Justin uses the words "having thus won the throne" once again after mentioning the fight with the prefects. This has led scholars including Tarn (*Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 47 n2) to surmise that the acquisition of his kingdom by Chandragupta followed the war with Alexander's satraps, the last of whom, Pithon did not leave India till 316 B. C. But the words "having thus won the throne" are not to be construed merely with the preceding sentence describing incidents in connection with the war with the prefects. They refer also to the events that preceded the clash of arms with the Macedonian commanders, and in fact, sum up the whole episode relating to the rise of Chandragupta. For a similar summing up of the exploits of Seleucus, see Appian, *Syrian Affairs*, XI 9.55 referred to above. In the detailed account given by Justin we are expressly told that Chandragupta was stimulated to aspire to royalty by an incident that happened immediately after his flight from Alexander's camp in 326/25 B.C. The use of the term *deinde* (thereafter) after "new sovereignty" suggests that the Macedonia War came *some time after* the change of government among Indians. In the *Mudrārākshasa* too the total destruction of *Mlechchha* chieftains and troops follows the dynastic revolution in Magadha (*Indian Culture*, II. p. 561 f.)

5. Justin, *Inv. Alex.*, 327.

6. *ibid.*, 328

7. *ibid.*, 328.

king about the marriage relationship and adds that "some of the exploits were performed before the death of Antigonus and some afterwards"¹ i.e., after 301 B.C. That these operations cannot have reference merely to dealings with Chandragupta but include also events outside this country, that find mention earlier in Appian's narrative, e.g. the war with Syrian clans, is clear from other sources, such as the narrative of Justin who dates the treaty between the Syrian and Indian monarchs before the clash of arms of Seleucus with Antigonus. In fact Appian here sums up the career of Seleucus as a Nicator.

How long Chandragupta lived after the war with Seleucus cannot be precisely determined from Greek sources. His grandson Aśoka is known to have been a contemporary of Magas of Cyrene who died not later than 259—58 B. C. according to the evidence of Porphyry, which seems to be confirmed by the testimony of Callimachus, a contemporary poet, of Polybius (X. 22) and of coins.² The acceptance of this date implies that the XIII Rock Edict of Aśoka cannot be dated later than 259—58 B.C. as it speaks of Magas as alive. As rescripts of morality began to be written when Aśoka was anointed twelve years, his coronation could not have taken place after 270—69 B.C. The death of Chandragupta and the reign of his son Bindusāra must, according to the evidence we have cited, fall between the Seleucidan war and 270—69 B.C. Tradition assigns a period of 24 years to the reign of the first Maurya, 25, 27 or 28 years to Bindusāra, and 4 to the interval between the accession and the coronation of Aśoka. If we accept the mean figure 27 for Bindusāra, a period of 55 years must have intervened between the accession of Chandragupta and the coronation of his grandson. The former event took place according to this calculation not later than $270-69+55=325-24$ B.C. An early date for the rise of Chandragupta is suggested by the fact that at the time of the partition of Triparadeisos (321 B.C.) Antipater had to give the kingdoms that lay along the Indus and the Hydaspes (Jhelum) to Indian *Rājās* "for it was impossible to remove these kings without royal troops under

1. *Roman History*, Vol. II., Book XI. 9.55, p. 204. (Loeb Classical Lib., translation by White.

2. Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas*, pp. 449 ff.

the command of some distinguished general.¹ The inadequacy of "royal troops" and the absence of "distinguished general" are inexplicable unless the more important among the prefects of Alexander had already been put to death or expelled. That achievement is ascribed by the Latin historians solely to Chandragupta who, and not Āmbhi or the Paurava, "was the leader who achieved their (i.e., Indians') freedom"². It is true that the great liberator is not mentioned in connection with the partitions of Babylon and Triparadeisos. But we have similar reticence in regard to Eudemos who had been directed along with Taxiles to assume the administration of the province governed by Philippus as early as 324 B.C.³ He survived Porus, and clung to some part of India till about 317 B.C.

Greek and Latin writers frequently corrupt the name of Chandragupta. It was Sir William Jones who solved the puzzle and found in the appellations used by the classical historians and geographers variant forms of the name of the first Maurya as known from Indian sources. Writers of our own country, too, sometimes use epithets which require a few words of comment. As is well known the name of Chandragupta does not find a place in the epigraphs of his descendants. It, however, is distinctly referred to in the Junāgaḍh Rock Inscription of Rudradāman I. It is also known to Patañjali and a host of Indian bards and chroniclers, playwrights, poets and even philosophers. Among classical writers the nearest approximation to the correct name (*Sandrokoptos*) is made by Phylarchus, who is quoted by Athenaeus⁴. Strabo, Arrian and Justin have *Sandrocottus*. Appian and Plutarch corrupt it into *Androcottus*. In the *Mudrārākshasa* we have the cognomens Chanda-siri (Chandraśrī), Piadaṃsaṇa (Priyadarśana) and Vṛishala⁵. Chandraśrī is of course the shortened form of the name Chandragupta with the addition of the honorific Śrī⁶. The attribution

1. Dio. XVIII. 39; *McCrindle Ancient India in Classical Lit.* p. 211—12.

2. *Inv. Alex.* p. 327.

3. *Inv. Alex.*, p. 177 Smith, *Aśoka*, (3rd ed.) p. 12.

4. Strabo says that Sandrocottus adopted the surname Palibothros (*Pāṭalīputraka* ?), *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 66.

5. Haridas Siddhantabagis edition, pp. 42, 374.

6. The usual practice is to put the honorific before the name. For a contrary usage, of *Aśokaśrī* in *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, *Khāravelaśrī*, *Veda* or *Skandaśrī*, *Skandaśrī*, *Śaktiśrī*, *Balaśrī* in inscriptions, and *Yajñaśrī* in the *Purāṇas* etc.

to Chandragupta of the appellation Piadaṃsaṇa, if based on correct tradition, is of great interest as it is generally known as an epithet of his famous grandson, Aśoka, and his common designation in inscriptions. As a title of royalty it finds mention in the *Vishṇudharmottara* as quoted in the *Rājadharmakaustubha* of Anantadeva¹. But its use does not appear to have been so common in early times as that of Devānampiya. Vṛishala is taken by some to hint at Chandragupta's extraction from the Śūdra line of the Nandas. But the cognomen is used in the epic and law books also of *Kshatriyas* and others who deviated from orthodoxy. An ingenious suggestion has been made in recent times that the expression really stands for *basileus*², the Greek word for king. There is, however, no suggestion in Indian literature that Vṛishala is a royal epithet. The word has a social and no political significance, and is often applied to non-royal personages, particularly wandering teachers and ascetics like the Buddha³. ✓

Regarding the ancestry of Chandragupta Indian writers have not preserved any unanimous tradition. There is no doubt agreement in regard to the name of the family to which he belonged, which is invariably given as Maurya. But the origin and derivation of the word present a problem which requires elucidation. The Brāhmanical commentators like Dhundirāja and the annotator of the *Vishṇu Purāṇa* derived the expression from Murā, supposed to be the wife of a Nanda king, and grandmother or mother of the first Maurya. There is, however, no warrant for this view in early texts. The Purāṇas make no mention of Murā and do not refer to any dynastic connection between the Nandas, who were of Śūdra extraction, and the Mauryas. No doubt they say that after the extermination of all Kshatriyas by Mahāpadma Nanda, kings will be of Śūdra origin. This cannot however be taken to imply that all the post-Mahāpadman kings were Śūdras as some of them, e.g., the Kāṇvas, are distinctly styled *dvija*. In some Purāṇic texts

1. Kamal Krishna smritirtha's ed. p. 43

2. I.H.Q., XIII (1937), p.651.

3. *Kaushīliya Arthasāstra* (Text), p. 199 R. K. Mookerjee, *Hindu Civilisation*, p. 264.

the reading is *Śūdra-prāyāsto adhārmikāḥ*¹. *Śūdra*-like and irreligious are not an inapposite description of several members of the Maurya family who showed predilection for Jainism and Buddhism. One text, the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, goes so far as to brand the Mauryas as *asuras*². *Suradvish*, it may be remembered, is used by the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in reference to people beguiled by the Buddha³. The earliest authorities to claim a Nanda origin for the first Maurya are the *Mudrārākshasa* and the mediaeval versions of the *Bṛihat-kathā*. It is, however, to be noted that the Greek accounts do not suggest any blood relationship between Chandragupta and Agrammes, the Nanda contemporary of Alexander. The former is mentioned by Justin as "born in humble life⁴." The reference, to our mind, points to the fact that Chandragupta was not born in the purple and was not a scion of the royal line which he overthrew. It is significant that Plutarch includes "Androkottos" among the persons who, according to several historians, disclosed to Alexander the meanness of the origin of the contemporary ruler of the Prasii, apparently the last Nanda king. It does not seem probable that people who sneered at the "barber" line of Magadha could themselves claim no higher status in society.

Buddhist writers do not regard Maurya as a metronymic. They invariably represent it as the name of a clan⁵ the members of which ranked as Kshatriyas since the days of the Buddha. Even Kshemendra who speaks of Chandragupta as *pūrvanandasuta* in his version of the *Bṛihat-kathā*, distinctly mentions Aśoka as born in the Solar Race in the *Avandānakalpalatā*⁶. The latter view accords with the testimony of several mediaeval inscriptions⁷. The antiquity of Moriya or Maurya as a clan name is clear from the *Mahāparinibbāṇa Sūta* which represents the people in question as Kshatriyas and rulers of the little

1. Pargiter, *Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. 25.

2. 88. 5.

3. I. 3. 24.

4. *Inv. Alex.* p. 327.

5. For traditional Buddhist accounts of the origin of the name, see Malalasekera, *D.P.P.N.*, II. 673.

6. Story No. 59, v. 2. 'Saurya' Kula may be regarded by some as a mistake for Maurya Kula, (ii. p. 209). but the supposition loses its force when later on in the same story we find Saurya and Maurya together in the passage—*Sphīta Saurya-Maurya-Mahāvamsāvanapañhānana Śrīmad-Aśokadevaḥ*.

7. *Ep. Ind.* II, p. 222

republic of Pippalivana, probably lying between Rummindei in the Nepalese Tarai and Kasia in the Gorakhpur District¹. Some recent writers seek to connect the first Maurya with Gandhāra and its neighbourhood on the basis of evidence which does not bear scrutiny². The suggested identification of Chandragupta with Sisikottos is not borne out by Greek evidence. The treatment of the two eminent men by Alexander is different, and there is nothing to show that Sisikottos was a mere stripling when he met the Macedonian king for the first time. Equally implausible is the attempt to connect Śakuni, whom the Kāshmir Chronicle represents as the great-grand-father of Aśoka, with Śakuni of Gandhāra, famed in the *Mahābhārata*³. Śakuni is by no means an exclusive designation of Gandhārian princes as it occurs in the Purāṇic list of Videhan kings⁴. In *Mudrārākshasa*, Act V, the Gandhāras are actually found arrayed against Chandragupta.

History does not record when the founder of the Maurya dynasty was born. As he was a mere stripling when he saw Alexander in 326—25 B.C. his birth could not have taken place before the middle of the fourth century B.C. Certain writers, as has already been noted above, record traditions that he was of royal extraction. The *Bṛihatkathā* and the *Mudrārākshasa* connect him with the Imperial Nanda dynasty of Magadha, and Buddhist commentators with the ruling family

1. *P. H. A. I.*, 4th ed., pp. 160, 217.

The names Morieis, Meroes and Moeres are known to classical writers (*C.H.I.* I. p. 470 ; *McCrimdell Inv. Alex.* pp. 108, 256). But their connection, if any, with Sandrocottus is not clear. If Morieis is a tribal name it may well stand for Moriya or Maurya.

Mauryaputra of *Mudrārākshasa* (II, 6, p. 99) may simply mean, 'belonging to the Maurya clan'. Cf. Śākyaputra, Nātaputta. It is by no means an exclusive designation of Chandragupta. The *Kalpasutra of Bhadrabāhu* ed. by Jacobi (p. 28) refers to a Mauryaputra Kāśyapa as one of the eleven gaṇadharas. Cf. also *Abhidhānacināmaṇi* I. 32.

2. Gandhāra Origin of the Maurya Dynasty and Identification of Chandragupta with Sasigupta, by H. C. Seth. In *Indian Culture*, X. pp. 32n, 34, it is said that "Chandragupta was a man of the *Uttarāpatha*" and that "Hwen Thsang narrates a legend (Beal, *Buddhist Records*, I., p. 126 *Sic.*) which connects the Śākya-Mauryas with the country of Udyāna". The passage on which the last statement is based is not quoted. The pilgrim's story (Beal, I. 128) simply mentions Udyāna as a place of refuge of a Śākya fugitive. The evidence hardly suffices to represent either the Śākyas or Chandragupta as "men of the *Uttarāpatha*." Is it suggested that *Mayūra-rāja* (king of peacocks) on p. 126 is to be taken to refer to Chandragupta ?

3. Seth, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

4. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, 89, 29.

of Moriyānagara, perhaps identical with Pippalivana of early Pāli texts, members of which had to take shelter in Puppapūra (Pāṭaliputra) when the last monarch of the line had been put to death by a certain powerful Rājā. The queen consort of Moriyānagara, we are told, gave birth to Chandragupta, and the child is said to have been reared by a herdsman and a hunter¹. A variant form of the story is given by the Burmese². The foundation of the Maurya city (Moriyanagara) is there attributed to princes of Vaiśālī that had escaped from the massacre of Adzatatath (Ajātasātru). According to Jain tradition recorded in the *Paṛiśiṣṭaparvan*³, however, Chandragupta was born of the daughter of a peacock-tamer (Mayūraposhaka) who lived in an obscure village. The sources of Trogus and Justin knew Chandragupta as a *novus homo*, a man "born in humble life". This does not accord with the tradition regarding his imperial pedigree, though it may well be reconciled with the story that his family, though sprung from a ruling *Kshatriya* clan, had fallen on evil days. Justin's reference to the hero's encounter with "a lion of enormous size" and "a wild elephant" of monstrous shape further shows that the *Chandraguptakathā* known to the Latin historians of the early century of the Christian era, might not have been altogether ignorant of Chandragupta's traditional association with hunters and tamers of the wild denizens of the forest. Little that is historical can, it has to be conceded, be extracted from these legends.

It should, however, be noted that all our authorities agree that the Mauryas hailed from Eastern India, the land of the Pṛāsī. Young Chandragupta's detestation of the Prasian contemporary of Alexander, to which Plutarch bears witness, is in conformity with the tradition that the poor plight in which the Maurya family found itself in the twenties of the fourth century B.C. was due, in large measure, to the aggressive policy of neighbouring rulers, particularly the imperialists of Magadha.

1. *Mahawanso* (Turnour) I. p. xl.

2. Bigandet, *Life or Legend of Gaudama*, II. p. 126.

3. (Text) VIII. 231; cf. the Buddhist tradition connecting the name Moriya with *mota* (peacock), Malalāsakara, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names* II. 673.

Chandragupta's first emergence from obscurity into the full view of history occurs in 326—25 B.C. when he met Alexander. The fact is recorded by two of the classical writers, viz., Justin, who draw upon the history of Trogus, and Plutarch. The young Maurya might have acquainted the Macedonian invader with conditions in Eastern India. "Alexander", he is reported to have said in later times, "narrowly missed making himself master of the country, since its king was hated and despised by his subjects for the weakness of his disposition and the meanness of his origin." Details of the original speech and the manner in which it was delivered are not recorded. But we are told by Justin that its tone gave offence to the Macedonian king who gave orders to kill the Indian lad. The latter sought safety by a speedy flight². Curiously enough some modern editors emend the text of Justin and propose to read *Nandrum* in place of *Alexandrum*. The name Nanda, however, is not known from any other classical source, and Plutarch, who also refers to the meeting between Alexander and "Androcottos", makes separate mention of the king or kings of the Prasii. Classical writers record other instances of Alexander's impatience with boldness of language. The cases of Cleitus and Callisthenes may be recalled in this connection³.

The narrative of Justin leaves the impression that after his departure from Alexander's camp Chandragupta retired to a forest tract, drew together a body of armed men and 'solicited the Indians to overthrow the existing government.' and support a new sovereignty⁴. Modern translators of Justin's text characterise the warriors who gathered round the Maurya as a band of robbers. But the original expression used by the Latin historian has the sense of mercenary soldier, hunter, as well as robber. The former senses are in consonance with Indian tradition. According to the story told in the *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*. troops were levied for Chandragupta with wealth procured by

1. Plutarch, (Loeb.) p. 403; McCrindle, *Inv. Alex.*, p. 311; cf. also Curtius and Diodorus in *Inv. Alex.* pp. 222, 282.

2. *Inv. Alex.*, p. 327.

3. Cf. Grote, *History of Greece*, (E.L.S.), XII., pp. 140ff, 147ff.

4. Justin, *Inv. Alex.*, p. 328; Watson's translation, p. 142. "The new sovereignty" of Justin reminds us of the words *Mauṛye naye rājani* of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa*, Act. IV., p. 278.

metallurgy or mineralogy (*Dhātuvāda*) for the purpose of uprooting Nanda¹. The purpose of the levy stated in the Jainta text is important. In the light of this evidence 'the overthrow of the existing government' alluded to by Justin, can well be taken to refer to the subversion of the rule of the Nandas. As a matter of fact Justin in the earlier part of his narrative apparently draws a distinction between this event and the war with the prefects of Alexander, preparations for which were made *thereafter* (*deinde*). According to a subsequent passage, however, the winning of the throne and reigning over India seem to follow and result from the fight with the Macedonian commanders. The problem is not free from difficulties and our views have been stated in connection with the chronology of Chandragupta.

If the "overthrow of the existing government" does not refer to the fall of the Nandas, but only to the destruction of the Macedonian domination in the Indus valley, we shall have to assume that the classical writers, who recounted the story of the rise of Chandragupta, knew nothing regarding the fate of Agrammes, about whom they speak so much, and were ignorant of the dynastic revolution that gave Chandragupta the throne of Pāṭaliputra and the crown of Prasii. It is not very probable that the *Chandragupta Kathā* on which they must have drawn for some of their thrilling episodes, had no reference to the tragic end of Alexander's Magadhan contemporary who was "detested and held cheap by his subjects."

Be that as it may, for details of the momentous events that led to the supersession of the Nandas by the Mauryas we must turn to Indian chroniclers and story-tellers. No contemporary account has survived. The traditional story is told differently by different writers. In some cases only fragments have survived. One of the earliest of these, which lies embedded in the *Milinda Pāñho*,² preserves its heroic character as a tale of war between the contending forces of the Nandas and the Mauryas. The lustre of Chandragupta is, as in the narrative of Justin, yet undimmed by that of an all powerful chancellor. His

1. Jacobi's edition, 2nd. ed., p. lxxiv : Text. VIII. 253-54.

2. S.B.E. XXXVI., p. 147. It is interesting to note that the Ceylonese commentator turns Nanda into "Nandagutta of Brāhmaṇa caste" (*Ibid* n. 3).

opponent Bhaddasāla is a brave soldier, a general of the Nandas, not an astute minister. The accounts of the Purānic genealogists, the chroniclers of Ceylon and the *Nītisāra* of Kāmandaka are still marked by comparative simplicity. They relate how the Nandas were uprooted and the "earth passed to the Mauryas¹". But the credit for the achievement, for "anointing the glorious youth Chandragupta as king" over the earth (or Jambudvīpa) is given to a minister, the *Brāhmaṇa* Kauṭilya, Chāṇakya or Vishṇugupta. The treatise on statecraft ascribed to the latter goes so far as to omit in this connection all explicit reference to Chandragupta².

We have further embellishment in the *Mudrārākshasa* which competent critics are inclined to assign to the ninth century A.D³. Kauṭilya is now definitely the leading actor in the drama. The Nanda king who falls a victim to his wrath is named Sarvārthasiddhi, and the family is referred to as of noble birth (*abhijana*⁴). *Mlechchha* chieftains, Parvata, Parvataka, Parvateśvara or Saileśvara, his brother Vairodhaka, son Malayaketu and Meghāksha or Meghanāda, king of the Persians, take part in the dynastic quarrel along with hordes of Śakas, Yavanas, Kirātas, Kambojas, Bāhikas, Khasas, Hūṇas and others. The barbarians appear at first as allies of Chandragupta. But when promises made to them are evaded, and Parvata and his brother fall victims to Chāṇakya's cunning, Malayaketu turns against the Maurya and joins the Nanda minister Rākshasa. The storm that threatened to burst upon Chandragupta was averted by jealousies and quarrels among his enemies. The *Mlechchha* forces dispersed and the discomfiture of Malayaketu as well as Rākshasa was complete. In the play the battle of intrigue proves more efficacious than the arbitrament of the sword. None of the *Mlechchha* chieftains have names which can be regarded as standing for genuine Greek or Persian

1. The reference to the Āratṭas equated with the "band of robbers" of Justin, that some recent writers find in the Purānic texts is due to a misreading (Pargiter, *DKA*, p. 26 n 35.).

2. *Arthasāstra*, Bk. XV., concluding verse.

3. Keith, *Sanskrit Drama*, p. 204.

4. *Mudrārākshasa* p. 386.

originals and the appearance of the Hūṇas in connection with the Magadhan conflict of the fourth century B.C. exposes the true character of several incidents narrated in the play. The identification of Parvataka with Porus, proposed by some writers,¹ has little to support it. Parvataka and his family are clearly branded as *Mlechchha* in the play, and their forces as *Mlechchha-bala*; on the other hand the Purus or Pauravas could claim an illustrious Vedic and epic ancestry. The territory over which Parvataka ruled is described by Jain writers as *Himavatkūṭa*,² while Porus ruled at first the country between the Jhelum and the Chenab to which were added territories stretching as far as the Hyphasis or Beas and the Indus. In the *Mudrārākshasa* one Sindhusena or Susheṇa appears as the prince of the Indus region. Lastly, Parvataka is slain by a poison maiden (*Vishakanyā*) as a result of Kauṭilya's intrigue, while Porus is killed by Eudamus, according to one reading of the text of Diodorus, and by Alexander himself according to Pseudo-Callisthenes.³

The Kashmirian redactors of the *Bṛihatkathā* show their independence of the tradition followed by the play by introducing a Yogananda, a Nanda produced by magic, that is, by the entry of an adept in that art into the body of the genuine (*pūrva*) Nanda. They also attribute to Śakaṭāla, the minister of the real Nanda, the destruction of the son of the supposititious king, and the bestowal of the royal dignity upon Chandragupta, child of the genuine monarch. Chāṇakya, according to this version, is simply a protege and an instrument of Śakaṭāla.⁴ The real Nanda king is now definitely described as a Śūdra.

Fresh accretions to the tale are met with in the *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, the *Mahāvamśa Tikā*, and the legend of the Burmese

1. *C.H.I.*, I, 471 : "Identification of Parvataka and Porus." H. C. Seth.

2. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan* (Op. cit., VIII, 297—98 (p. 222). Jacobi has the following note on Parvataka : ' In the list of the kings of Nepal, according to the Bauddha Pārvatīya Vamśāvalī (*Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XIII, p. 412) the 11th king of the 3rd dynasty, that of the Kīrātas, is Parba, apparently our Parvata; for, in the reign of the 7th king, Jitedāsti, is placed Buddha's visit to Nepal, and in that of the 14th, Sthunka, Aśoka visited the country.' (*Ibid.* p. lxxv, n1.)

3. Smith, *Aśoka*, (3rd ed.), p. 12 n ; McCrindle, *Ancient India in Classical Literature*, p. 178.

4. Text, Nirṇaya Sagara Press, *Kathāpiṭhalambakaḥ Tarangas* IV and V ; Penzer's edition of Tawney's translation, Vol. I, p. 40—57.

Buddha.¹ We have different versions of the story of the initial failure of Chāṇakya and Chandragupta in their attack on the Nanda dominions, and their ultimate success due to experience gathered on the spot. According to the Buddhist version the last of the Nandas is put to death. But in the narrative of Hemachandra he is permitted to leave his kingdom.² There is lack of agreement in regard to another important matter. The *Mahāvamśa Tikā* definitely assigns Chāṇakya to the city of Taxila.³ On the other hand, Hemachandra seems to suggest in the *Abhidhānachintāmani*⁴ “that Kauṭilya, son of Chanaka was a Dramila” i.e. an inhabitant of South India. But as the lexicon identifies him with Vātsyāyana, Mallanāga, Pakshilasvāmin as well as Vishṇugupta, little importance attaches to its testimony. Curiously enough the *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*⁵ mentions Golla-*viśaya* as the home-land of the famous minister. The identity of the place is not known.

The overthrow of the Nandas rid the Magadhan empire of a dynasty that, in spite of its great services, had failed either to secure the good will of the subjects, or to show any intelligent grasp of the policy to be pursued towards the invaders in the North-West. The new regime had to justify itself by efficient administration, by promotion of the welfare of the people, and securing their protection against the *Yavana* menace. Regarding some of the methods adopted by Chandragupta opinions may differ. According to Justin “he oppressed with servitude the very people whom he had emancipated from foreign thralldom”⁶ We do not know how far the remark applies to the Magadhan provinces. The judgment is of too sweeping a character to be supported by all other available evidence. We shall not enter here into the details of the Mauryan polity which will be dealt with in a later chapter. The emancipation of the Indians from foreign thralldom, to which the Latin historian refers, was

1. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan* Canto VIII; *Mahāvamśo* (Turnour) pp. xlii. Bigandet, *op. cit.* II., 126 ff.

2. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, VIII 315 f., p. lxxvi.

3. *Mahāvamśo* (Turnour) p. xxxixf

4. III. 517.

5. VIII. 194.

6. McCrindle, *Invasion*, p. 327

in itself no mean achievement. We now turn to this famous episode in the career of Chandragupta. ✓

The liberation of the land of the five rivers and the border country from the Macedonians was a long process. It required two wars to expel the prefects of Alexander and hurl back the battalions of one of the most ambitious and capable of his successors. The great Macedonian king and conqueror wanted to incorporate the territories he had conquered in India permanently into his empire. He made elaborate arrangements for their defence and administration. Garrisons were posted in several places, colonies planted, cities fortified at important strategic points and dock-yards constructed. Satraps recruited from Indians as well as Macedonians and allied peoples from the West were appointed to assume the administration of some of the conquered provinces. Certain areas were, however, left under the control of Indian *Rājās*.¹

Alexander died in 323 B.C. His successors, who met to partition the Macedonian empire at Babylon on the day after his death, and again at Triparadisus in Syria towards the end of 321 B. C., had no desire to withdraw altogether from the Indian provinces. They could not however be blind to certain new developments. The Macedonians were torn by internal dissensions and their ranks were getting thinner in India. Antipater, regent of Macedonia from 321 to 318 B.C., managed to retain control over the satrapy of India which "bordered on the Paropanisadae" which he gave to Pithon in 321 B.C. "Of the adjacent kingdoms he gave that which lay along the Indus to Porus, and that along the Hydaspes (Jhelum) to Taxiles (Āmbhi), for it was impossible to remove these kings without royal troops under the command of some distinguished general."² Smith seems to think that the names of the *Rājās* have been interchanged.³ This is not improbable. But it is well to remember that the city of Taxila did not lie far from the Hydaspes, and Porus might have been given charge of a part of the Indus valley over which Eudamus, the Thracian, exercised sway as one of the joint successors of Philip.

1. See ch. III above.

2. McCrindle, *India as described in Classical Literature*, pp. 201—2.

3. *Asoka*, (3rd ed.), p. 12n.

Eudamus was probably disfavoured as a partisan of Eumenes, a rival of Antipater.¹ It is significant that according to a reading of a passage of Diodorus, Eudamus is said to have seized a number of elephants after the death of Alexander, having treacherously slain Porus.² The hostility to Porus is explicable if the Indian Rājā had been granted favours by the Regent in Macedon at the expense of the Thracian commander. Eudamus had however soon to leave India to help Eumenes in his fight against Antipater. The event is usually dated in or about 317 B.C. and must in any case have preceded the execution of Eumenes in 316 B. C. Pithon, who favoured the side of Antigonos,³ another great general who claimed a share of Alexander's inheritance, left India about the same time in 316 B.C.⁴ and was slain in the battle of Gaza four years later.⁵

The leading part in the destruction or expulsion of Alexander's commanders in India is, as already stated, assigned by Justin to Chandragupta. The earlier attempt of Samaxus, the Assakenians, the Brāhmaṇas of the Lower Indus valley, and Musicanus (Mousikanos) had ended in failure. The process of liberation is likely to have begun before the Partition of Triparadisi when the lament is already heard about the growing power of the Indian Rājās and the absence or at least inadequacy of royal "troops under the command of some distinguished general." "It seems however that the country" "emancipated from foreign thralldom" did not stretch at first beyond the Hydaspes (Jhelum) in the north-west. The Macedonian Regent claimed to dispose of territories extending eastwards as far as that river in 321 B.C. But soon the Magadhan frontier reached the Indus. According to a fragment quoted by Pliny, possibly from Megasthenes, "the Indus skirts the frontiers of the Prasii"⁶ that is, the Magadhan empire, doubtless during some part of the reign of Chandragupta as his predecessors did not control any part of the Punjab, and his successors seem to have exercised sway over the province as far as the

1. McCrindle, *Invasion* p. 389.

2. Smith, *Aśoka*, (3rd ed.), p. 12n.

3. McCrindle *Invasion*, p. 400.

4. *Tarn Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 47 n 2.

5. McCrindle *Invasion*, p. 400.

6. McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian* p. 143.

north-western mountains. The Indians whose territory "bordered on the Paropanisadae" (in the Kabul valley) are known to have been under Pithon till c. 316 B.C. The district to which Eudamus clung, after the partition of Triparadisus which ignored him, may also have lain, like that of his predecessor Philippus, partly at any rate, beyond the Indus. These commanders had been partisans of Antigonus and Eumenes respectively. The execution of Eumenes in 316—15 B.C.¹ and the exhaustion of Antigonus in the war of 315 to 312—11 B.C.² left the way clear for Seleucus who returned to Babylon in 312—11 B.C., and soon made himself master of "the whole region from Phrygia to the Indus".³ Appian, to whom we are indebted for the information conveyed by the last few words, seems clearly to suggest that the Indus formed the boundary between the dominions of Seleucus and Chandragupta before the two kings came to blows. The former is said to have "*crossed the Indus and waged war with Androcottus, king of the Indians, who dwelt on the banks of that stream.*"

It is a matter for surprise that the classical writers who have so much to say regarding the Indian campaigns of Alexander should preserve reticence in regard to the details of the famous struggle to which Appian refers. Even the date of the war and its total duration are not known for certain. Appian informs us that the fight went on "until they (i.e., the Syrian and Indian Kings) came to an understanding with each other and contracted a marriage relationship (*kedos*)."⁴ He adds that some of the exploits of Seleucus were performed "before the death of Antigonus (at Ipsus, 301 B.C.) and some afterwards."⁴ The "understanding" or treaty with Chandragupta and "settlement of affairs in the East" are definitely dated by Justin before Seleucus' return home to prosecute the war with Antigonus.⁵ Pliny refers to the opening up of India with its numberless nations and cities by the arms of Alexander,

1. *Inv. Alex.* p. 385, *Companion to Greek Studies* p. 110.

2. *Companion*, p. 110.

3. Appian, *Roman History*, Vol. II. (Loeb Library)—Syr. XI. 9-55.

4. Appian, *Ibid.*

5. *Inv. Alex.*, 328.

Seleucus and Antiochus, but gives no details that might have thrown light on the war with Chandragupta.¹

While the war itself received scant attention at the hands of the historians, the "understanding" seems to have attracted greater notice. Plutarch tells us that Chandragupta "made a present to Seleucus of five hundred elephants."² Fuller information is given by Strabo who says :

"Along the Indus are the Paropamisadae, above whom lies the Paropamisus mountain ; then, towards the south, the Arachoti ; then next, towards the south, the Gedroseni, with the other tribes that occupy the seaboard ; and the Indus lies, latitudinally, alongside all these places ; and of these places, *in part*, some that lie along the Indus are held by Indians, although they formerly belonged to the Persians. Alexander took these away from the Arians and established settlements³ of his own, but Seleucus Nicator gave them to Sandrocottus, upon terms of intermarriage (*epigamia*) and of receiving in exchange five hundred elephants."⁴ /

In another passage we are informed that "the Indus River was the boundary between India and Ariana, which latter was situated next to India on the west and was in the possession of the Persians at that time (i.e., at the time of Alexander's invasion) ; for later the Indians also held much of Ariana, having received it from the Macedonians."⁵

Diplomatic relations were also established between the contracting powers, for Strabo refers to the sending of Megasthenes to the court of Chandragupta at Pāṭaliputra.

The details of the "understanding" to which Strabo bears witness leave no room for doubt that Seleucus could not make much headway. Even royal Macedonian troops under a dis-

1. McCrindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, p. 107. The journeys made from the Beas for Seleucus Nicator, to which Pliny bears witness, may, as pointed out by Macdonald, refer not to reconnaissances made during a campaign, but to information gathered subsequently by Greek envoys accredited to the Court of Pāṭaliputra (*Megasthenes and Arrian*, 1926, 129 ff., *Camb. Hist. Ind.* I. 430.).

2. Plutarch, *op. cit.* Ch. LXII.

3. Governments or provinces according to Tarn (*Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 100).

4. *Geography* (Loeb. Library) translated by H. L. Jones, (XV. 2. 9), p. 143.

5. *Ibid.* p. 15 (XV. i. 10).

tinguished commander failed to dislodge the king of the Prasii from the Punjab. On the contrary, the invader had to give up some of the Macedonian possessions on the Indus "receiving in exchange the comparatively small recompense of five hundred elephants." In regard to the extent of the territory surrendered by Seleucus and the nature of the marriage compact of which, according to Strabo, the cession was in part the consequence, there has been considerable difference of opinion. Smith believed, on the strength of a passage of Pliny, that the countries ceded included the four satrapies of Gedrosia, Arachosia, Aria, and the Paropamisadae.¹ Pliny however simply says that "numerous authors include in India the four satrapies" in question.² He may have been referring to conditions not in the days of Seleucus and Chandragupta, but in some later epoch, e.g., that of the monarchs of the Scytho-Parthian dynasties who reigned previous to A.D. 77.³ The words used by Strabo "and of these places, *in part*, some that lie along the Indus are held by Indians" do not convey the idea of a complete abandonment of the Satrapies in question including even Aria. Tarn is inclined to think that only those parts of the three satrapies of Paropamisadae, Arachosia and Gedrosia *which lay along the Indus* were ceded by Seleucus. In Gedrosia the district ceded was, in his opinion, that between the Median Hydaspes (identified with the Purali) and the Indus. Of the satrapy called Paropamisadae Chandragupta got, according to this view, only Gandhāra between the Kunar river and the Indus. The boundary in Arachosia is not precisely defined but it is suggested that what Chandragupta got lay east of a line starting from the Kunar river to somewhere near Quetta and then going to the sea by Kalat and the Purali river.⁴ The contention of Tarn cannot however be accepted in its entirety.

1. *E.H.I.*, 4th ed. p. 159.

2. *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 156 ; *E.H.I.* 4th ed. p. 159.

3. Pliny's information was not solely drawn from the contemporaries of Alexander and Seleucus. He refers to the opening up of India by the arms of Antiochus as well as Alexander and Seleucus. He utilised the evidence not only of "old writers" but of ambassadors who came to the early Roman emperor (Mc Crindle *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, pp. 103, 107). He speaks of a discovery of a shorter route to the Indian ports by a merchant (p. 111) in comparatively recent times.

4. Tarn, *Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 100.

In regard to one point he is definitely wrong. The V and XIII Rock Edicts of Aśoka count among the north-western tribes who were included within the *rāja-vishaya*, and were subject to the jurisdiction of imperial officials, not only the Gandhāras but the Yonas. Association with the Kambojas and the Gandhāras suggests that these Yonas are the people of that name mentioned in the *Mahāvamśa* whose city Alasanda had been identified by Cunningham and Geiger with Alexandria in the country of the Paropamisadae near Kabul¹. When Strabo says that "the Indians held *much* of Ariana, having received it from the Macedonians", it is difficult to believe that he means only the comparatively narrow strip of territory that lay to the west of the Indus and east of a line drawn from the Kunar to the Purali.

In regard to the marriage compact Macdonald draws a distinction between the terms *kedos* and *epigamia* used by Appian and Strabo respectively. The former, we are told, would signify an actual marriage, while the latter probably implied only "a convention establishing a *jus connubii* between the two royal families".² It is observed in this connection that there was no room in the family circle of Seleucus for any actual marriage relationship. Both the expressions used by our authorities may, however, signify a "connection by marriage," though the word used by Strabo has also the sense of "right of intermarriage between states."³ The cession of territories "upon terms of intermarriage (*epigamia*)" implies that the marriage did take place, the lands in question being possibly treated as the dower of the Seleucid princess like the Kāśi village in the Buddhist story of Kosalā devī and Bombay in case of Catherine of Braganza⁴.

By his victory over the Nandas and the Macedonians Chandragupta became master of the extensive region stretching from Magadha and Bengal to the easternmost satrapies of Ariana. The king of Pāṭaliputra and the Prasii dominated

1.. Cunningham, *Ancient Indian Geography*, p. 18 ; Geiger *Mahāvamśa*, p. 194.

2. *Camb. Hist. of India*, Vol. I., p. 431.

3. Liddell and Scott., *Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 626, 946.

4. See on this point the observations of Tarn, *Greeks in Bactria and India* p. 174n.

not only "the whole tract along the Ganges",¹ but the countries on the Indus that had once acknowledged the sway of the Persians and Alexander. Unfortunately the classical writers do not say much about any further extension of the Magadhan dominions in the interior of India. We have only the vague statement of Plutarch that "with an army of six hundred thousand men (Chandragupta) overran and subdued all India."² The conquest and subjugation of one important province, that of Surāshṭra or Kāthiawār in the extreme west, is however clearly attested by the Junāgaḍh Rock Inscription of Rudradāman which refers to Chandragupta's *Rāshṭriya* or High Commissioner Pushyagupta, the Vaiśya, who constructed the famous Saurāsana Lake. The incorporation of this country within the Magadhan empire implies control over Avanti or Malwa. The 'Muriyas' or Mauryas are actually included by Jain writers among the successors of Pālaka of Avanti³. Ujjain, the capital of the province, long remained the seat of a Maurya viceroyalty. In the days of Aśoka, grandson of Chandragupta, the Maurya frontier reached North Mysore. As the only specific conquest claimed by that emperor is that of Kaliṅga, the extension of the empire beyond the Tuṅgabhadrā must be due to one of his predecessors. Certain mediaeval inscriptions speak of parts of Mysore being protected by Chandragupta.⁴ The evidence is late and too much cannot be built on it. It should however be noted that a number of Tamil authors, usually assigned to the early centuries of the of the Christian era, make allusion to the "*Moriyan*" having crossed a mountain with snow-capped peaks towering to the skies, and these allusions will be discussed elsewhere in the section on South India. In the third century B.C. the Chitaldrug district marked the furthest limit of the Maurya empire in the South. But posterity ignored these limitations and loved to regard the hero

1. *Megasthenes and Arrian* p. 141. That the king of the 'Palibothri' (Pāṭaliputra) referred to in the Fragment is Chandragupta is clear from the description of the standing army which follows the account of the people and the capital city.

2. Plutarch, *op. cit.*, Ch. LXII.

3. Jacobi, *Kalpasūtra of Bhadrabāhu*, 1879, p. 7 ; *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, Jacobi, 2nd. ed., p. xx.

4. Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, p. 10.

who had overthrown the Nandas and given protection to the earth harrassed by the *Mlechchhas* as "king over all Jambudvīpa", sole monarch of the country that extends "from the lord of the mountains (*Śailendra*, i.e., the Himalayas), cooled by showers of the spray of the divine stream (Ganges) playing about among its rocks, to the shores of the Southern ocean (*dakṣiṇāraṇava*) marked by the brilliance of gems flashing with various colours."¹ These words find an echo in the statement of Plutarch quoted above, thus pointing to the prevalence, as early as the beginning of the Christian era, of the tradition of Chandragupta's universal rule—the realisation of the ideal of a united India under an *Ekarāṭ* or *Chakravartin* to which the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Nikāyas* give eloquent expression.

The political and military record of Chandragupta, brilliant as it is, does not sum up all his achievements. The great soldier who had liberated one part of his country from an unpopular dynasty, and another from foreign yoke, the architect of an empire embracing the greater part if not the whole of India, was as "strenuous in the arts of peace as in the arts of war." The conqueror of Bhadrāsāla and Seleucus, master of a host of 600,000 foot-soldiers, 30,000 cavalry, 8,000 or 9,000 elephants², wore the velvet glove as soon as conditions permitted. Great though he was as a war-leader, he had no inordinate passion for the sanguinary revelries of the battle-field. He set out to accomplish the unity of India, but beyond its borders he never cast his covetous eyes. The statement of Arrian, who apparently quotes from Megasthenes, that "a sense of justice, they say, prevented an Indian king from attempting conquest beyond the limits of India"³ perhaps reflects one of the fundamental principles of Mauryan foreign policy as laid down by the founder of the line and upheld by his successors.

The conquests of Chandragupta brought India into closer touch with the outer world, particularly with the countries of the Hellenic West. We have noted above that the clash of arms with the *Yavana* king of Western Asia was followed by

1. *Mudrārākṣha*, Act. III., verse 19.

2. McCrindle *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 141, 161.

3. *Ibid.* p. 209.

the establishment of an intimate relationship of a personal character between the ruling houses of Pātaliputra and Babylon-Seleucia. A lady of the Seleucid family probably graced the royal palace of the king of Prasii, and a Greek envoy adorned his court. The consideration thus shown did not remain unreciprocated. We are informed by Athenaeus on the authority of Phylarchus that the Indian king sent sundry presents to Seleucus which included certain powerful aphrodisiacs¹. Chandragupta's respect for Hellenic genius is also illustrated by the story that he did honour to the altars of Alexander². Diodorus speaks of a Greek author named Iamboulus who was made a slave by the Ethiopians and was later ship-wrecked on the shores of India and carried to the "king of Palibothra who had a great love for the Graecians³." It is, however, difficult to determine whether we have here an allusion to Chandragupta's phil-Hellenism, or, a reference to the liking that his son and successor had for Greek sophists. It is interesting to note in this connection the presence of a considerable number of foreigners in the metropolitan city of Pātaliputra. A special board of municipal officers engaged itself in looking after their safety and comfort. Special arrangements were also made to meet their judicial needs⁴. Arrian informs us that "the Indians do not use aliens as slaves."

In civil government Chandragupta showed an aptitude which placed him far above the ordinary warrior-king. The selection of councillors from men respected on account of their high character and wisdom, an equitable system of judicial administration, efficient management of municipal affairs, development of roads and irrigation works, concessions to husbandmen and artisans, encouragement of passenger traffic and commerce, and perhaps also the suppression of piracy, by a board of admiralty, limitation of slavery, and many other measures to promote the prosperity and civilization of the people, do not support the stricture of Justin that he "changed

1. McCrindle, *Invasion* p. 405.
2. Smith, *E.H.I.* p. 125n.
3. *Ancient India in Classical Literature*, p. 204-5.
4. *Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 42, 68.

the name of freedom to that of bondage” and oppressed his countrymen. The judgment of the Latin historian may have been based on the strict discipline that he enforced, and the severity of the penal code which permitted mutilation. We shall not deal in detail with these and other matters relating to Maurya polity as they will receive attention in a later chapter. We shall content ourselves with a brief notice of the king and his court.

The monarch usually resided in the famous metropolis of Pāṭaliputra, known to the Greek and Latin writers as Pali-bothra, Palibotra and Palimbothra.¹ But on occasions he must have moved about from place to place like Harsha. Appian’s reference to Androcottus as the king of the Indians, who dwelt on or about the Indus,² suggests that the emperor might have used some city on or near that river as an alternative capital or at least as a ‘camp of victory’ (*jayaskandhāvāra*). The classical writers have left interesting accounts of the Maurya metropolis in the land of the Prasii. Pāṭaliputra, we are told was a large and wealthy city, situated at the confluence of the Erannoboas (Hiraṇyavāha or Son) and the Ganges, stretching in the form of a parallelogram. Its “inhabited quarters” covered an area 80 stades (9 miles 352 yards) in length and 15 stades (1 mile 1270 yards) in breadth. It was enclosed by a wooden wall³ pierced with loopholes for the discharge of arrows and crowned with 570 towers, apparently for keeping watch. The approaches to the city consisted of 64 gates. Running along the wall, but outside it, was a gigantic trench fed by water introduced from the neighbouring rivers, 6 *plethra* (200 yards) wide and 30 cubits deep, constructed for the purpose of defence as well as reception of sewage. Sumptuous palaces adorned the city, which housed a numerous population, including a large

1. The foundation of the city, as is well known, is ascribed by Indian writers to Udāyi, son of Ajātsātru. Curiously enough a tradition quoted by Diodorus, presumably on the authority of Megasthenes (McCrinkle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 37), gives the credit to Heracles.

2. Appian, *op. cit.* XI. 9. 55.

The capital of *Uttarāpatha* (the Indus Valley and the Borderland) in the Maurya period is known to have been at Taxila. It is not improbable that Appian alludes to the residence of Chandragupta in this city.

3. Cf. Patañjali IV. 3. 2. “Pāṭaliputrakāḥ prāsādāḥ Pāṭaliputrakāḥ prakāra itī”

number of foreigners. The care of the metropolis was entrusted to a corporation of 30 members (*astynomoi*).¹

If Aelian is to be believed the royal palace "where the greatest of all the kings" of India resided was a marvel of workmanship with which "neither Memnonian Susa with all its costly splendour, nor Ekbatana with all its magnificence, can vie." Parks, resonant with the melodious notes of peacocks and pheasants, shady groves and ever green trees "set in clumps and branches woven together", some of which were brought from distant lands, lovely tanks abounding in tame fishes, and with little princes fishing, playing and swimming in them — were all calculated to lend charm to the scenery.² The majesty and beauty of the palace befitted the residence of a mighty monarch, and its dweller is revealed to us as a man of fine aesthetic sense with "a genuine joy of life and love of nature" not usually associated with a stern soldier. Excavations have brought to light the ruins of Maurya buildings at the village of Kumrahar, not far from the modern city of Patna. The wooden structures, especially fragments of timber palisade, probably date back to the reign of Chandragupta.³

Among the inmates of the palace the consorts of the great king claim special attention. One of them, if we accept the traditional interpretation of the treaty between Chandragupta and Seleucus, must have been a Seleucid princess.⁴ Jain tradition refers to the name of another lady called Durdharā, represented as the mother of Binduasāra.⁵ Burmese legends do not mention the name, but assign to the mother of Chandragupta's successor a Maurya lineage and the chief place among the queens.⁶ The queens of the first Maurya are rather

1. McCrindle, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 37, 65f, 67f. 87, 209f.

2. Cf. Rock Edict II of Aśoka for importation of herbs, roots and fruits.

Monahan, *Early History of Bengal*, p. 177 ; *C.H.I.*, I., p. 411f ; McCrindle, *Ancient India in Classical Literature*, p. 141f.

Curtius in his *History of Alexander (Inv. Alex.)*, pp. 188f) describes an Indian palace which is taken by some to be that of Chandragupta. But as has been pointed out by Monahan (*op. cit.* p. 173), it is not clear whether we have here a description of the court of the Imperial Mauryas or of some minor potentate.

3. Monahan, *op. cit.* pp. 173f ; Smith *E.H.I.* (4th edn.) p. 128n.

4. Cf. the views of Tarn, one of the most recent writers on the subject,

Greeks in Bactria and India, p. 174n.

5. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, pp. lxxix, 234 (VIII. 439).

6. Bigandet, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

shadowy figures, and we do not know whether like the wives of Chandragupta's Hellenistic contemporaries they played any conspicuous part in public life, court ceremonial, and policy. The sons of the king find mention in a passage of Aelian noted above as engaged in fishing, playing and swimming in ponds within the palace grounds. We do not know if these youngsters included the famous Bindusāra whose name and that of Simhasena among those of the sons of Chandragupta have been transmitted by tradition.¹

Besides these members of the royal family, there was a host of women "bought from their parents" who took care of the king's person inside the palace, and even accompanied him on hunting expeditions.²

We have interesting glimpses of the private life of the king. He sometimes permitted himself to indulge in drinking³, in all probability at sacrifices, but never to an excess as he might fall a victim to foul plots of ambitious women. He did not sleep in day time, and even at night he had to change his bed occasionally as a precaution against attempts on his life⁴.

The court of Chandragupta was no less imposing than his palace. In later times the grammarian Patañjali could still recall the *Chandragupta-sabhā*⁵. Here the king conferred with his councillors and assessors who excelled in wisdom, received ambassadors, listened to the reports of the *episkopoi* who inquired into and watched all that went on in his vast dominions, and administered justice to his subjects even when the time came for attending to his person, that is, when he was to be rubbed with cylinders of wood⁶.

The prominent figures of the *sabhā*, who were outside the class of diplomats, are known more from tradition than from documents of unassailable fidelity. Mention is no doubt made in an inscription of the Rāshṭriya Pushyagupta, the Vaiśya, who was put in charge of an important province. It is,

1. Simhasena may have been only an epithet of Bindusāra.
2. *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 70f.
3. Cf. Bindusāra's letter to Antiochus Soter, asking the latter to buy for him sweet wine. (*Inv. Alex.* 409n).
4. *Meg. and Arr.* p. 70f.
5. I. I. IX.
6. *Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 41, 70f, 85, 217f

however, not known definitely whether he graced at any time the central *darbār* of his sovereign.

Tradition has preserved for us the names of several persons who are reputed to have attended the court of Chandragupta. Among these the place of honour should be given to the celebrated Kauṭilya or Chāṇakya, the all-powerful chancellor of the Maurya empire. We have already referred to the famous work on statecraft attributed to him. The contemporaneity of the king and his famous minister, though not proved by irrefragable evidence, is rendered possible by the unanimity of traditions to that effect recorded in the works of Indian, Ceylonese and Burmese writers of different persuasions. A second minister of Chandragupta, according to Buddhist legends, was a Jaṭilian, Maniyatappo by name, mentioned in the *Mahāvamsā Tikā*¹.

Among other personages who figured in the *Sabhā* mention may be made of envoys who came from foreign courts. Of these the most celebrated was Megasthenes. He brought his credentials from Seleucus and resided long enough in Pāṭaliputra to observe things for himself. He wrote a book on India but unfortunately this interesting work has been lost. Only fragments have survived in the quotations of later classical writers.

If tradition is to be believed, the court of the first Maurya, like that of many of his successors who wore the imperial crown of India, opened its portals to a third group of personages, besides ministers and diplomats, viz., religious teachers. Jain writers emphasise that in his later days Chandragupta came into intimate touch with pontiffs of their faith, the most eminent among whom was Bhadrabāhu who is reported to have died in 170 A.V., i.e., 15 years after the accession of the first Maurya according to one reckoning². He was the reputed author of the *Kalpasūtra* and other works. According to the *Rājāvalīkathē* he was born in a Brāhmaṇa family at Koṭikapura in Puṇḍravardhana³.

1. Turnour, *op. cit.*, p. xlii.

2. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, pp. vii, xx, 248 (IX. 112).

3. *Ind. Ant.*, 1892, p. 157.

Fleet (*Ibid.*) pp. 156ff : *J.R.A.S.* 1909, p. 23n) is sceptical about the Jain story. Jacobi (*Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, pp. vi—vii : *Kalpasūtrā* p. 22) thinks that some works, e.g., the *Niruktas*, attributed to the sixth Patriarch, who died in 170 A.V., really proceeded from the pen of a late namesake. According to him the *Samacharis* may be regarded as the work of the great Bhadrabāhu.

The king, says Strabo, left the palace usually on four occasions, viz., to lead the army in person in time of war, to administer justice, to offer sacrifice, and lastly, to go to the chase. Hunting was a favourite pastime. The king marched out of the palace to the accompaniment of drums and gongs, and was surrounded by a host of armed women who rode "some on chariots, some on horses and some even on elephants". Spear-men were posted to protect the whole company. The king hunted in fenced enclosures, either from a platform in his chariot or from the back of an elephant¹.

On occasions he seems to have attended public spectacles. One such show is referred to by Pliny (on the authority of Megasthenes) in which foals of *kartazons*—a kind of one horned animal, probably the rhinoceros,—were set to fight each other². Some of the facts mentioned by the classical writers receive confirmation from the inscriptions of Aśoka. The predecessors of that king, we are told, went on *vihāra-yātrā*, an important feature of which was hunting. They also celebrated *samājas* which may be compared with the public spectacles of Pliny.

In a passage of Strabo³ reference is made to a great festival on the occasion of the hair-washing ceremony of the Indian king when the people brought him costly presents and made a display of their wealth. Certain writers are inclined to think that the Greek geographer got his information from Megasthenes, and that therefore the ceremony pertains to the court of Pāṭaliputra. They further urge that the festival was borrowed from Persia and regard it as a proof of India's indebtedness to Persian culture. It may however be pointed out that Strabo introduces the passage in question with the words "the following statements are made by *historians*", and makes special mention of Clitarchus⁴. The festival in question might, therefore, have been current even before Chandragupta. At any rate there is little warrant to connect it definitely with the court of Chandragupta at Pāṭaliputra.

1. *Megasthenes and Arrian* p. 71.

2. *Ibid.* p. 58.

3. XV. I. 69.

4. Author of a *Life of Alexander*, and a contemporary of that king. (cf. *Inv. Alex.* pp. 8, 10 : *C.H.I.*, 399, 675) Jayaswal in *J.B.O.R.S.*, II., p. 98. ~~misses~~ the reference to Clitarchus.

The personal gifts of Chandragupta were of a varied kind. Reference has been made to his interpidity and ability as a soldier, vigour and wisdom as an administrator, to his keen sense of beauty and love of nature. To these he added a wide intellectual curiosity and, according to traditional accounts, a deep interest in religion. These were probably imbibed from contact with philosophers. Megasthenes tells us that it was a general practice among Indian kings to consult through messengers a class of philosophers called the Hylobioi—a section of the Sarmanes (*Sramaṇas*)—who dwelt in the woods and lived a life of continence. The questions regarding which rulers sought illumination related to the cause of things and other matters. The services of these philosophers were also employed for the worship or supplication of deities¹. Again, at the beginning of the year a great Synod of philosophers was called by kings in order that they might communicate useful suggestions in writing concerning *the improvement of crops or the cattle or the promotion of public interest*². It will perhaps not be unreasonable to surmise that the Greek envoy learnt about some of these things from what actually came under his observation at Pātāliputra.

The king who conversed with philosophers, to benefit by their wise counsel, included within the range of his interest, even wild races. This is well illustrated by stories about the Astomi, who lived near the source of the Ganges and were brought to the court, and the Enotokoitai who died on the way as they refused to take food³. These stories may not be worthy of credence in all their particulars. But they prove that the classical writers credited Chandragupta with an amount of curiosity, not unworthy of a modern anthropologist.

The reign of Chandragupta was not altogether devoid of literary interest. We have already seen that tradition associates

1. McCrindle, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 102ff. Next in rank to the Hylobioi were the physicians who lived indoors, and effected cures by regulating diet rather than by the use of medicines. Among philosophers there were some women. Medicine received attention along with philosophy.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 83, 214. Or, according to another interpretation, *prosperity of either fruits or living beings or concerning government*. *Geography of Strabo* (Loeb), VII, p. 69.

3. pp. 75, 80.

the authors of the *Kauṭīliya Arthasāstra* and the Jaina *Kalpasūtra* with his court. The existence of a body of literature including *Suttas*, *gāthās*, and *apadānas* in the early Maurya period is vouched for by the inscriptions of Aśoka¹. The reference to the story of Herakles and Pandaia² in the fragments of Megasthenes points to the popularity of epic tales (*ākhyānas*) in some shape. In explaining the statement of Megasthenes that the Indians had no written laws Bühler suggested that the Greek envoy took the term *Smṛiti* used by his informants in the sense "memory" instead of "sacred tradition concerning law" or "the law books"³. If this view be correct then a part at least of the *Smṛiti* literature was probably in existence in the days of Chandragupta. The *Indika* of Megasthenes, though largely based on personal observations of the famous ambassador, may have drawn upon texts of this type⁴ as well as myths and legends some of which had probably a place in the folk literature of the day.

We have seen above that one of the occasions when the king came out of the palace was to offer sacrifice. This possibly implies that Chandragupta was known to the Greeks as a follower of the Brāhmaṇical religion. The celebrated Jaina author Hemachandra admits that the emperor patronised heretical (i.e., non-Jaina) teachers (*mithyādrīkṣhāṇḍimatabhāvitam*⁵). As has been noted above one of the king's ministers was a Jātilian or a follower of "a class of ascetics, so called on account of their matted hair"⁶. Jātilakas figure in a list of "schools or corporate bodies of Wanderers, or of Hermits" mentioned in early Pali Canon⁷. We do not know what was exactly the attitude of Chandragupta towards the Buddhists. If the *Theragāthā* Commentary is to be believed he put into prison the father of an Elder (*Thera*) at the instigation of Chāṇakya⁸.

1. Cf. the Bairat Edict and Pillar Edict VII. (EE. dhammāpadāne)

2. *Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 163, 206.

3. Monahan, *Early History of Bengal*, pp. 167 f.

4. Compare the statement of Strabo (McCrimdle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*. p. 69) :

"They marry many wives, whom they buy from their parents, giving in exchange a yoke of oxen", with *Smṛiti* texts on *Ārsha* marriage (Gautama, IV. Baudhāyana, I. 11. 4. : Manu, III. 29). See also Monahan *op. cit.*, p. 165.

5. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan.*, p. 232 (VIII. 415).

6. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, Vol. I. p. 931.

7. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*. p. 145

8. Malalasekera *op. cit.* pp. 846, 860

But the person in question may have suffered for his political views or conduct. Jain tradition avers that towards the end of his life he became a convert to the religion of the Tirthankaras after the rival teachers had been discomfited in a synod¹. It is also affirmed that when Magadha was confronted with a famine of twelve years Chandragupta abdicated in favour of a son named Simhasena and retired to Śravaṇa-Belgola in Mysore with the Saint (*Śruta-kevalin*) Bhadrabāhu. There he starved himself to death in the Jaina fashion². Several inscriptions in Mysore dating from about 900 A.D. refer to the pair (*yugma*) Bhadrabāhu and Chandragupta³.

Bindusāra

Chandragupta died after a reign of 24 years, probably some time after 301 B.C. But his work did not perish with him. This was no doubt due in large measure to the vigour and efficiency of the system of government which he had organised, and the wise policy he had followed. But the machinery of administration would by itself hardly have worked smoothly if it had not at its head a man who appreciated the ideals and methods of the dead king and did his best to preserve the traditions of the illustrious founder of his line. This is not the only title of Bindusāra, the son and successor of Chandragupta, to fame. If he sought to preserve unimpaired the heritage of his father, he also prepared in some respects the way for his great son. His reign is not merely a continuation of that of Chandragupta. It also presaged in some respects the glorious epoch of Dharmāśoka.

Little is known about the early life of the new king. If Jain tradition is to be believed the name of his mother was Durdharā. History does not record if he was one of the young

1. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan.* (Jacobi), 2nd ed., p. lxxix, VIII. 415 ff.

2. *Ibid.*, VIII. 444, *Samādhimaraṇaṁ prāpya Chandragupto divaṁ yayau : Rājavalikathe I.A.* 1892, p. 157.

3. Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from Inscriptions*, pp. 3ff.

Fleet (*I.A.* 1892, pp. 156 ff : *J.R.A.S.*, 1909, p. 24n) regards the story as presented in the *Rājāvalikathe* as "probably of quite modern invention". Even the legend in its earlier form "has not the slightest historical value as affecting Chandragupta, the grandfather of Aśoka".

Smith (*E.H.I.*, p. 154) however thinks "that the tradition probably is true in its main outline."

princes who, according to Aelian, amused themselves while fishing in the unruffled sheets of water within the palace grounds of the greatest of all the kings of India, and learning how to sail their boats. In later life he showed an aptitude for government and a taste for culture which in all possibility were acquired in boyhood. The name of Amitrochades (variants, Amitrachates and Allitrochades, the λ λ having arisen from a loosely formed cursive M)¹ by which he is known to the Greeks suggests not a weakling brought up amidst the pleasures of the harem, but a man of steel, fit to bear the weight of a great empire and defend it against all enemies. Fleet takes the Greek appellation as meaning "Amitrakhāda", 'devourer of enemies', which occurs as an epithet of Indra. Lassen and others prefer to equate it with the Sanskrit Amitraghāta, slayer of foes—a term that occurs in the *Mahābhāshya*² of Patañjali. *Amitrāṇām hantā* is a well known title of royalty in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and *Amitraghātīn* is frequently used in the *Mahābhārata* as an epithet of princes and warriors.³

As Chandragupta, according to the evidence of Plutarch and Justin, had not yet mounted the throne in 326—25 B.C. and is traditionally credited with a reign of 24 years, his successor could hardly have obtained the imperial crown before 301 B.C. The new monarch must have ceased to rule before 270—69 B.C. if the king Magas, mentioned in the rescripts of his son written not earlier than the twelfth regnal year, died in 258 B.C. Regarding the actual period of Bindusāra's rule the evidence is discrepant. The Purāṇas allot to him a period of 25 years. Burmese and Ceylonese chronicles raise the figure to 27 and 28 respectively.

Greek historians say little about the internal affairs of India in the days of Bindusāra. Our main reliance has to be placed on tradition. The accounts of the Buddhist and Jain writers of a late date suggest that the services of the most able and astute of Chandragupta's officials were retained by his son. Among these was Kauṭilya or Chāṇakya who is said to have had a rival

1. Fleet *J.R.A.S.* 1909., p. 24,n.

2. III. 2. 2.

3. *Ait Br.* VIII. 17 : *Mbh.* II. 30. 19 ; 62. 8, VII. 22.16.

in Subandhu.¹ The post of chief minister (*agrāmātya*) eventually went to Khallāṭaka and later on to Rādhagupta². The name of the principal queen was, according to the *Mahāvamśa Tīkā*, Dhammā. The *Aśokāvadāna* calls her Subhadrāngī³.

Bindusāra was fortunate in having in his sons, especially Aśoka, proconsuls of exceptional ability who did much to curb the impetuosity of some of his officials in the outlying provinces. With their help it was not difficult for him to maintain unimpaired the empire he had inherited from his father and even to extend its boundaries. The *Divyāvadāna* tells the story of a revolt in Taxila, the citizens of which complained of the high-handedness of certain *amātyas*. That there was a substratum of truth in the complaint appears not improbable in view of certain words of Aśoka himself in the Kalinga edicts that refer to the measures adopted by that great emperor to check ministerial oppression in the provinces. When Bindusāra was confronted with a difficult situation in Taxila, he is said to have commissioned Aśoka with the task of restoring order. This the prince accomplished without much difficulty as the people "were not opposed to the *Kumāra* or even to king Bindusāra" and had grievance only against the "wicked officials" (*dushṭ-āmātyāḥ*). The Maurya prince is said to have pushed on to the *Svaśā rājya*, evidently a mislection for *Khaśa rājya*, the realm of the Khaśas, whose settlements extended, according to Stein, in a wide semicircle from Kastvar to the Vitasta (Jhelum) valley in the south and west of Kashmir.⁴

Some interesting details about the warlike activities of Bindusāra and his Chancellor, the Brāhmaṇ Chāṇakya, are recorded in the history of Tāranātha. We are told that they destroyed kings and nobles of about sixteen cities and reduced to submission all the territory between the eastern and the western seas. In view of the late date of the author it is difficult to say what

1. *Parīśiṣṭaparvan*, VIII. 446. ff. Cf. *Kaṭhāsarisāgra Kathapiṭhalambaka* 5th *Taraṅga*, Verse 115 ; Penzer's edition, I. p. 57.

2. *Divyāvadāna*, p. 372. *P.H.A.I.* 4th ed. ; pp. 243n, 248. The *Divyāvadāna*, p. 372 refers to a council of five hundred under Bindusāra.

3. R. L. Mitra, *Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, p. 8; Biganded II, p. 128.

4. *J.A.S.B.*, Extra No. 2, 1899, p. 69

element of truth is contained in his narrative. The vanquished-monarches "between the eastern and the western oceans" have been taken to refer to the petty sovereigns of the Peninsula.¹ This is not a necessary inference as North India from Kāthiawar to Bengal may also be said to extend from sea to sea. Kalinga on the eastern coast of the Deccan is known to have retained its independence till the days of Aśoka. The statement of Tāra-nātha, if based on authentic tradition, need mean nothing more than the suppression of revolts of the type alluded to in the *Divyāvadāna* in the vast stretch of territory between Surāshtra and the Gangetic delta. No Greek or Indian record of any early date connects the name of Bindusāra Amitraghāta with the conquest of any large tract of Peninsular India. Inscriptions of Kalinga and Mysore, which tell us so much about the Nandas, Chandragupta and Aśoka, are silent about the second Maurya.

Bindusāra seems to have been perfectly pacific abroad. He maintained the relations of friendship with the Hellenic world that had been established in the later days of his illustrious father. Diodorus testifies to the great love of the king of Pali-bothra (Pāṭaliputra), apparently an early Maurya monarch, for the Graecians. The policy was reciprocated by the Greek contemporaries of Bindusāra. Strabo refers to the sending of Deimachos to the court of "Allitrochades, son of Sandrokottos"². We learn from Pliny that another envoy named Dionysius came from (Ptolemy II) Philadelphus, king of Egypt (285—47 B.C.)³. The name of the monarch to whom he presented his credentials is not stated. The Egyptian king appears to have been a contemporary of both Bindusāra and Aśoka. The silence of Greek and Latin writers regarding Aśoka, when contrasted with repeated references to Chandragupta and Amitraghāta makes it probable that the monarch in question was Bindusāra, rather than his great son. Athenaeus, a Greek writer of the third century, tells us on the authority of Hegesander, that Amitrochates, king of the Indians, wrote to Antiochus (I of Syria) asking that monarch to buy and send him sweet wine, dried figs and a

1. *J.B.O.R.S.*, II, p. 79 ff.

2. II. 1.9. ; *Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 12, 19.

3. *Ibid.* pp. 13, 20 ; *Ancient India in classical Literature*, p. 108.

sophist. The Syrian king replied "we shall send you figs and the wine, but in Greece the laws forbid a sophist to be sold¹".

The passage, brief as it is, is important in more respects than one. It reveals Bindusāra as a man who sought like his father to foster friendly contact with the outer world. The mention of sweet wine and figs coupled with the information vouchsafed by Phylarchus, Strabo and Appian, affords a glimpse of the kind of pacific intercourse between India and the west, diplomatic, social and commercial, that was ushered in by the treaty between Chandragupta and Seleucus. But the most significant fact noted by Hegesander is the demand for a Greek sophist. It affords proof not only of Bindusāra's taste for culture, but his special interest in philosophy. We may also take note of the story related by Diodorus of a Greek author-Iambulus, who was hospitably received by the king of Palibothra who had a great love for Graccians. The name of the king is not given. But the tale admirably fits the correspondent of Antiochus. Nor was the interest of the king of Pāṭaliputra confined to Greeks alone. The *Divyāvadāna* has an interesting reference to an *Ājiva-parivrājaka* as a prominent figure in the court of the second Maurya². Ājivikas, it may be remembered, were special objects of the bounty of the later kings of the line like Aśoka and Daśaratha. The intensity of Aśoka's devotion to matters spiritual is better understood when we remember the kind of men his father loved to gather round himself. It is said in the Seventh Pillar edict that kings in times past also desired that "men might be made to progress by the promotion of Dhamma". Bindusāra might well claim a place among these past rulers. From him and some of the brilliant men who graced his court, Aśoka may well have imbibed ideas that fructified in later times, when he came into close touch with the Buddhist *Saṅgha*. The reign of Bindusāra may with plausibility be regarded as a prelude to that of his great son.

Certain unhappy incidents clouded, according to tradition, the last days of Bindusāra. He had doubtless many children, both sons and daughters, as we may infer from the Fifth Rock edict of Aśoka. If reliance can be placed on late chroniclers,

1. *Inv. Alex.*, p. 409n.

2. pp. 370ff ; *P.H.A.I.*, 4th ed., p. 267n.

the relations among some of them were none too friendly. Aśoka, whom we have seen taking a prominent part in the affairs of the state during the life-time of his father, is represented as having seized the throne as the outcome of a fratricidal struggle. The story lacks confirmation from contemporary sources and its verification must await future discoveries. The incidents to which it refers, if they really took place, must have helped to deepen in the long run the religious conviction of Aśoka who sought to make amends for the misery he had inflicted on his fellow creatures in his unregenerate days.

CHAPTER VII

SOUTH INDIA AND CEYLON

The inscriptions of Aśoka at Brahmagiri and Siddhāpura in Mysore mark clearly the southern limit of the Mauryan empire which might have extended even a little further south to the latitude of the modern city of Madras. Kannaḍa inscriptions from Mysore and Bombay Karnāṭak of the tenth and eleventh centuries A. D. preserve faint memories of the rule of Nandas in those parts, but there is little tangible confirmation of this tradition, unless it be that the punch-marked *purāṇa* coins found all over Deccan, South India and Ceylon are to be accepted as witnesses of ancient contacts between the North and South of which the details are now lost beyond recovery. Then there is the Jaina legend, late, multiform, and oft-discussed, of the migration of Chandragupta to Śravaṇa Belgola when Bhadrabāhu, the Jain patriarch, foretold a famine of twelve years' duration. Chandragupta is said to have lived several years as a Jain monk in Śravaṇa Belgola until his death by the rite of Sallēkhana. The legend is improbable in itself and the identity of the Chandragupta it relates to is not above doubt. A late Pallava charter mentions an Aśōkavarmā among the earliest rulers of Kāñchī, and one may wonder if this is a reference to the Mauryan emperor.

The most direct clues to the condition of South India and Ceylon in the Mauryan epoch are furnished by the references to the Southern kingdoms in Megasthenes, in the edicts of Aśoka, and in the short Brāhmī inscriptions in natural caverns with rock-cut beds scattered all over South India and found in somewhat larger numbers in the Madura and Tinnevely districts, and much more on the island of Ceylon. The oldest strata of extant Tamil literature cannot lay claim to equal antiquity, but they contain references to Nandas and Mauryas, and it will be necessary to review them in their contexts, particularly because they have been made the basis of far-reaching theories regarding a Mauryan invasion of South India by some writers, while others have seen in them a reference to the Mauryas of Koṅkān.

Lastly, the *Mahāvamsa* has conserved the story of Ceylonese affairs in much detail, and as the chronicle is obviously worked up from more ancient records, and some of its details find confirmation in the rock-cut Brāhmī inscriptions above mentioned, we come to know a little more of Ceylon in this period than of the mainland of South India.

The second and thirteenth Rock-Edicts of Aśoka mention the Southern kingdoms and Ceylon ; the list in the second edict is fuller and comprises the names of Cōḍa, Pāṇḍya, Satiyaputa, Keralaputa and Tāmbapaṇṇi. All these lands lay outside the empire of Aśoka, but he was on such friendly terms with them that he could arrange for the medical treatment of men and animals in all these lands, and for the importation and planting of useful medicinal herbs and roots wherever they were needed ; he also sent missionaries for the preaching of the Dhamma among the people of these countries—thus evincing his interest in the physical and mental well-being of his neighbouring states. Now the merest mention of such facts raises the presumption of a certain level of culture and progress in the arts of life. The Tamils and the Sinhalese had a settled polity and lived in well-ordered states, and some decades before the date of the Aśoka inscriptions, Megasthenes had heard somewhat of the trade of the Sinhalese and of the polity of the Pāṇḍyan kingdom¹. He knows that Ceylon is an island more productive than India of gold and large pearls ; a good part of the island was forest inhabited by wild beasts, a large breed of elephants among them. His quaint account of the Pāṇḍyan kingdom seems to be an idealised mixture of fact and fable. He says that Heracles had a daughter Pandaea to whom he assigned the southernmost portion of India ; the people in this country comprised 365 villages which brought by turns their tribute to the royal treasury every day of the year ; what is called tribute here seems to have been the supply of the provisions needed for a day for the royal household ; in the *Śilappadikāram*, a work of six or seven centuries later than the time of Megasthenes, we hear of households of shepherds in the capital city of Madura supplying ghee by turns to the palace².

1. K. A. N. Sastri, *Foreign Notices*, p. 41.

2. xvii, 1.7.

Much discussion has taken place on the name Satiyaputa ; it is now generally recognised that the ending *-puta* signifies membership of a tribe as demonstrated by Lüders. *Satiya* (which occurs as *sātiya* in Khālsi) must be sanskritized into *satya*-truth, though the formation *satiya* or *sātiya* must be held to be unusual. And the only tribe known to early Tamil literature, and answering to this description—‘members of the fraternity of truth’—are the Kōśar who were well known for their unswerving fidelity to the plighted word in assemblies and halls of justice, as well as for their heroism in war¹. The land of Koṅgu, modern Salem and Coimbatore districts roughly, is said to have been their home, and in the early centuries A. D. they seem to have overrun the Tuḷu country on the West coast. After the three well-known Tamil kingdoms, Pāṇḍya, Chōla and Chera (Kēraḷa), the tribe of the Kōśar may be said to occupy a considerable place in the literature of the Śaṅgam period, and it seems highly probable that they should find a place in the earliest enumeration of the political divisions of the Tamil country. It has been suggested that Satyamangalam in the Coimbatore district, the home of a subdivision of the Bṛhat-caraṇa sect of the Brāhmaṇas of South India, has something to do with this name *Satiyaputra*²; there is little direct evidence in support of the view, and it is difficult to trace the antiquity of Satyamangalam or the sub-sect which bears its name to such remote times ; but we know of several instances from the mediaeval period of Brahmin clans and groups distinguished for the very qualities of excellence in council-room and on the field of battle for which the Kōśar were celebrated, and there is no intrinsic improbability in the suggestion that Brahmins maintained this tradition continuously from the days of Bhīshma and Drōṇa of legendary fame. The Satputes among modern Marathas may have been emigrants to Mahārāṣṭra from the South³.

The impression of a fairly developed cultural *milieu* in the Tamil land derived from the references in Megasthenes and the Aśoka inscriptions is confirmed by other lines of evidence.

1. JRAS. 1923 pp. 609-13.
2. Smith : *Aśoka*³ p. 161.
3. JRAS. 1919 p. 584 n. 1.

Kauṭilya notes that the Pāṇḍya-kavāṭa, a pearl fishery on the coast of the mainland on the gulf of Mannar, was noted for the quality of the pearls it exported, and that Madhurā, the capital of the Pāṇḍyas, lent its name to some of the finest cotton fabrics of all India¹. The Brāhmī inscriptions in rock caverns in hills have many features in common with the similar records of Ceylon, and these are among the earliest monuments of the Tamil country to which we may assign a date with some confidence. The script employed has much in common with the brief inscriptions from Bhaṭṭiprōlu, and may well be assigned to the third century B. C. Though these inscriptions have not yet been fully elucidated, enough is known to say that they are mostly either brief donative records or simply the names of monks who once occupied the beds or caverns. The close resemblance between these monuments and inscriptions and others of the same age in Ceylon and the name Kaḷugumalai, Tamil for Gr̥dhrakūṭa, of one of the places where such inscribed caves are found, have been held to establish an exclusively Buddhist origin for these monuments ; it is, however, premature to formulate any views conclusively on such questions. New caverns and inscriptions are still being discovered one by one—witness the inscribed natural cavern at Mālakōṇḍa in the Nellore district². And tradition is strong that Jainism came into South India about the same time as Buddhism if not earlier.

While it is thus not possible to decide if these monuments are Jain or Buddhist or both in their origin, the study of the inscriptions made so far³ suggests that though the script employed in them was Brāhmī of the southern variety, the language was Tamil still in its formative stages. The script was alphabetic, and already included signs for peculiarly Dravidian sounds like *r*, *ḷ*, *ḷ*, and *ṇ*; other peculiarities are that vocalic consonants were represented by two symbols first the sign for the consonant and then the complete vowel signs—thus *yu* was written as *y* (a) *u*. These developments and other peculiarities, not detailed here, must have come as the result of a pretty long process of trial and error extending over several generations.

1. KA. II. 11.

2. ARE. 1937-8 II. 1

3. *Proc. Third Oriental Conference*. pp. 275 ff.

The exact contents of the inscriptions still remain obscure, but a few facts emerge from tentative studies of them. A husbandman (*kuṭumbika*) of Ceylon (Īla) figures as a donor; and a woman, members of the Karaṇi caste, and merchants (*vaṇikan*) figure in other inscriptions in a like capacity. These brief inscriptions are thus seen already to bear testimony to the support commanded from all classes of the laity by the ascetics who were engaged in the pursuit of the life divine in the solitudes of mountains and forests.

We must now turn to a consideration of the references to the Nandas and Mauryas in early Tamil literature. They occur in five poems, three of which are by one writer, Māmūlanār whose statements are the clearest, and one each by two other poets. The relative chronology of the Śaṅgam poets is by no means settled, and the whole body of Śaṅgam literature can only be dated within broad limits in the first three centuries A. D. Thus the mention of Nandas and Mauryas in these poems is by no means a reference to contemporary facts, but to events preserved in the memory of people or in other ways of which we have no knowledge now. It may even be doubted if two poets whose references are not half as intelligible as those of Māmūlanār were really referring to the Mauryas of history or some aspects of an obscure mythology; that they both refer to the same fact or myt his clear beyond doubt; the expressions used are identical, though one of them Kaḷḷil Āttiraiyanār¹, gives more details than the other—Paraṅgorranār². The fuller account refers to the Mōriyar, their victorious lance, their sky-scraping umbrella, and their chariots bearing banners; it then states that their strong bright-rayed wheel cut across a mountain at the end of the earth and rolled past it and past the broad disc of the sun fixed near the pass so made. The commentator ekes out the sense by some additions of his own; he says that the Mōriyar ruled the whole world, and that the mountain cut across by their discus was the silver-mountain which separated this earth from another world, and that the sun's disc was fixed near the pass by the gods. He also adds that the Mōriyar were the Chakravāla emperors or Vidyādharas

1. Puṇam 175.

2. Aham 69.

and Nāgas, an interpretation which would suit the alternative reading 'Ōriyar' much better than the Mōriyar, the Mauryas of history. But stress need not be laid on the alternative reading, because, the cutting of the hill and the rolling of the wheel are features that, as we shall see, recur in the unmistakable references of Māmūlanār to the Mauryan emperors. It is clear at any rate, that if these two other poets were also thinking of the Mauryas, they had but vague notions about them and their achievements, and classed them with the superhuman beings whose deeds fill the annals of universal history for many aeons after the dawn of creation according to the Purāṇic lore of India.

Māmūlanār had a better knowledge of the Nandas and the Mauryas, and his statements are much more precise and credible though he too retains the quasi-legendary feature which is all that the two other poets recorded about the Mauryas. He mentions the Nandas and the enormous treasure accumulated by them in a telling context. 'What is it', asks a love-lorn lady, 'that has attracted my lover better than my charms?' ; and among the alternatives postulated occurs this¹ : 'Is it the treasure accumulated in the prosperous Pāṭaliputra and hidden in the waters of the Ganges by the Nandas of great renown, victorious in war?' Here is much that we know of the Nandas from other sources, and one fact that is new—the manner in which they kept the treasure hidden under the waters of the Ganges, which reminds one of a similar practice attributed to the Mahārājas of Zabag by Arab travellers of the eighth century A. D. Māmūlanār's mention of the Mauryas is accompanied by equally clear and precise indications of historical events. There are two passages for consideration, both from the *Ahanānūru*. One² starts by saying that the lover would not stay behind even if he got the wealth of the Nanda for doing so—a second reference to this topic by this poet ; it then proceeds to say that Kōśar of the victorious banner started operations against their foes and gained victories against several ; but as Mōhūr did not submit to them, the Mōriyas who had a large army led an expedition ; and it adds that the Mōriyar's chariots rolled across a cutting made in the mountain

1. Aham 265.

2. Aham 251.

for that purpose. Here is perhaps some fresh support for the identification proposed above of the Kōśar with the Satiyaputa ; but what is more important, the Mauryan imperial power was so friendly to the Kōśar as to be ready to go to their help in their wars against their enemies ; this active intervention in the politics of the Tamil country brings to our view a phase of Mauryan imperialism that has so far escaped notice. The last reference in Māmūlanār¹ adds some more particulars ; it says that when the Mōriyar turned to the south, the war-like Vaḍugar preceded them as their van, and the mountain which was cut to make a way for the chariots on this occasion is described as the large snow-mountain reaching up to the skies—obviously the Himālayas. This last detail betrays that Māmūlanār too is by no means free from the legendary notion about Mauryas that was the entire stock-in-trade of the two other poets ; only he manages to convey to us some facts besides the legend. Vaḍugar is a rather vague term in Tamil literature ; it means literally northerners, and was generally applied to the Kannaḍa-Ṭelugu peoples of Southern and Eastern Deccan together. These peoples were included in the Mauryan empire, and it is probable that in a move further south they were called upon to take the lead.

One last reference to the Nandas is simple and clear ; it occurs in *Kuṟundogai*² and refers to the abundance of gold in Pāṭaliputra besides mentioning elephants bathing in the Son river.

These Tamil texts, separated from the age of the Mauryas by about three to five centuries, thus indicate to us that the Tamil states were within the sphere of Mauryan influence, if we may use a convenient modern expression for the relation, and that at least on one occasion the Mauryas went to the assistance of the Kōśar to enable them to subdue the rebellious chieftain of Mōhūr ; the Vaḍugar took a hand in this expedition.

And now one word on the legendary feature of the mountain being cut to make way for the wheel to roll across. This is obviously an echo of the mythology centring round the concept of the Chakravartin, the universal emperor, one of whose para-

1. *ib.* 281.

2. Poem no. 75.

phernalia (*ratnas*) is the *chakra* (discus) ; this *chakra* leads the way in his *digvijaya* and has many mysterious properties, and Aśoka was counted as one of such emperors as the *Mahāvamsa* and other Buddhist books show. It is significant that in most of the references to the wheel cited above, it is not clear if the wheel of the war-chariots or the symbol of empire is meant, though once Māmūlanār definitely says it was the former. This feature in any event cannot be treated as history.

Ceylon, like South India, steps into the light of history with its notice by Megasthenes and by the Aśoka inscriptions—both under the name Tāmbapaṇṇi which becomes Taprabane with the Greek writer. The opening chapters of the *Mahāvamsa* contain much edifying legend about the Buddha's visits to the island, the arrival of Vijaya, and his encounter with Kuvāṇṇā (Kuveṇi in other accounts), and his marriage with a princess from the Pāṇḍya country. Modern research has shown that the primitive population of the island were the Vaeddas, who were hunters living in forests and natural rock-dwellings ; the first immigrants into the island were probably people from the Malabar coasts who called themselves Nāgas and gave the name Nāgadvīpa to the northern section of the island, the ancestors of the modern Nāyars of Malabar—Nāya being but the Prākṛit form of the word Nāga. The Vijaya legend, the Sinhalese language, and the Brāhmī script of the earliest inscriptions, are clear proofs of the advent of North Indian influences directly by sea, and the story of the marriage of Vijaya with a Pāṇḍyan princess represents perhaps the growth of contact between Ceylon and South India after they had both been Aryanized, each in its own way. Sinhalese memory goes back to a time prior to the advent of Vijaya when trading vessels coming in search of local products like ivory, wax, incense, pearls and gems, were sometimes wrecked on the shores of Ceylon. Much of this pre-history is necessarily speculative, and there can be no certainty about details. By the beginning of the Mauryan period in India, however, we may be certain that important settlements had been established in different parts of Ceylon and a fairly high degree of culture attained. The northern plain where was located Anurādhapura, the capital city, Rōhṇa in the South-east, and Kalyāṇi in the South-west were perhaps

the most notable divisions in this period, and they might have started as independent colonies established by separate groups of settlers from the different parts of the mainland, being the first fruits, as it were, of the overflow beyond the limits of India proper and across the sea of the great movement of Aryan expansion begun in Vedic times. Agriculture was practised and rice grown in considerable quantity to meet the necessities of a growing population ; artificial irrigation by means of dams thrown across rivers and canals taking off from them had come into vogue ; and the art of building with large-sized burnt bricks was known.

According to the *Mahāvamsa*, the period covered by this volume comprised in the history of Ceylon the reigns of Paṇḍukābhaya (B.C. 377-307), Muṭṣasiva (307-247), Devānāmpiyā Tissa (247-207) and Uttiya (207-197). The chronology of the first two reigns is suspect, as there is good reason to believe that their duration has been unduly lengthened in order to make Vijaya and the Buddha contemporaries¹. The account of Paṇḍukābhaya's reign in the *Mahāvamsa*² is much of it palpable legend ; but from it we may conclude generally that the king had to fight some of his collateral relations ruling in different parts of the island to impose his authority on those areas, that he made Anurādhapura the capital of the newly united kingdom, and that his reign witnessed decided advancement in the evolution of Sinhalese culture by the blending of the indigenous Vaeda (Yakkha) elements with the Indo-Aryan elements which had entered the island with Vijaya and his followers. The capital city was well laid out with tanks, parks, and separate quarters for the different elements in the population including yōnas, and among the recipients of the king's benefactions were Nirgranthas, Ājivakas and Brāhmaṇas, besides various other heretical sects. Of the reign of Muṭṣasiva the chronicle has nothing to say except that he laid out the beautiful garden called mahāmegha-vana and that he ruled the fair land of Laṅkā from the splendid city of Anurādhapura. He had ten sons 'each thoughtful of the others' welfare'

1. Geiger MV. (Tr.) p. xxi.

2. *ib.* ch. x.

and two daughters. The second son Devānampiya Tissa was foremost among the brothers in virtue and intelligence, and succeeded his father. His friendly relations with the Mauryan emperor Aśoka, the exchanges of embassies and presents between them, the introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon by Mahinda and the fetching of a branch of the bōdhi-tree have been narrated in our account of Aśoka's reign. For the rest, there is good reason to believe that the development of culture by the reconciliation of the indigenous and exotic elements, by the growth of cities and the laying out of roads and extension of cultivation was going on apace. The Brāhmī inscriptions found by the score in practically all the caverns on every hill in the island and clearly belonging to the short period between the middle of the third century B. C. and the beginning of the first, attest the large numbers of Buddhist monks, votaries of the new sect introduced by Mahinda, and their peaceful occupation of these dwellings : but the primitive religious practices of the Vaeḍas seem to have been kept, up side by side with other forms of worship. It is quite probable that some of the dagōbas and vihāras now in ruins, particularly those in Anurādhapura, may in their origin date back to the age of Tissa¹ and his successors, and that the style of these structures was borrowed from India along with Buddhism. The greeting of Mahinda by queen Anulā and five hundred (i.e. many) other women², and their subsequent ordination after the arrival of Saṅghamittā³, as also some references to women in the cave inscriptions show that women enjoyed a considerable amount of freedom and influence in this early Sinhalese society. The earliest coins of Ceylon were like those of India, *purāṇas* or *śalākas*, pieces of silver or copper of varying shapes, generally circular or oblong with a corner or corners chipped in some specimens and bearing punch marks on one side. Silver and copper are not products of Ceylon, and the metals, if not the coins themselves, must have been imported from India. A fragment of an admirably engraved thin cornelian showing the figure of a king sitting upon an orna-

1. MV. ch. xx.

2. *ib.* xv 18.

3. *ib.* xix 65.

mental chair 'which can be no other than a royal throne' was found in 1884 among the debris left round the Yaṭṭhāla dagoba at Tissa ; and this is considered by Parker a specimen of early North Indian work under strong Greek influence affording proof of the intercourse between Tissa and Aśoka recorded in the *Mahāvamsa* ; he even suggests that the seated figure on the cornelian may be Aśoka himself¹.

Tissa had no son and was succeeded by his brother Uttiya. During his reign Mahinda and Saṅghamittā attained nirvāṇa and their remains were disposed of with all honours, and stūpas erected in their memory.

1. *Anc. Ceylon*, pp. 494-8.

CHAPTER VIII

INDUSTRY, TRADE, AND CURRENCY

Introductory

The outstanding achievement of Mahāpadma Nanda, the founder of the Nanda dynasty, was the completion of the political unity of Northern India, excluding the Indus basin, but including the Malwa tableland, the Kalinga seaboard and probably also a good part of the Deccan. Probably because of his low birth, he was led to make a clean sweep of the principal Kshatriya ruling families of his time and make himself, in the expressive language of the Purāṇas, 'the sole ruler of the earth.' The consequence of this absorption of the petty States of Northern India into a large empire could not but have been highly beneficial to the cause of material progress. Northern India, by virtue of its fertile soil and favourable climate, its magnificent waterways and its extensive coastline must have from the first enjoyed exceptional opportunities provided by nature for economic prosperity. Under the strong and centralised administration of the Nandas, trade and industry could not but advance greatly. In particular, the needs of their exceptionally wealthy court, to which later traditions bear witness¹ and their organised administration heralding that of the Mauryas must have given a great impetus to industrial and commercial effort. The direct interest of the Nandas in commercial development is perhaps indicated by their invention of a new standard measure referred to in the *Kāśikā* commentary² as well as their standardisation of the old silver coinage to be described later on.

Beyond the limits of the Nanda dominions lay the Indus basin conquered long before by the Achaemenids, but divided at this period into a group of small kingdoms and republics. Politically as disorganised as was Madhyadeśa at the time of the Buddha more than a century earlier, it stood now at a high level

1. Cf. *Mudrā-rākshasa* Act iii, v. 37 referring to the Nandas as *navanavati, sata-dravyakoṣiśvarāḥ*.

2. On Pāṇini ii. 4. 21.

of economic prosperity. The accounts of Alexander's officers inform us not only of numbers of rich and populous cities located in the land of the Five Rivers, but also of the wealth of the royal courts and republics. The devastating effects of Alexander's invasion could not but have affected disastrously the economic condition of the territories subdued by his arms and none of his measures for laying the foundation of an extensive commerce between India and the Hellenistic world took root immediately.

The liberation of North-western India by Chandragupta Maurya, preceded or followed in a short time by his deposition of the last king of the Nanda line, and the series of his subsequent victories laid the foundation of an empire extending from the Bay of Bengal to the Afghan highlands and from the Himalayas to the Narmadā and beyond. The military successes of Bindusāra and Aśoka helped not only to complete and consolidate the newly built empire, but extended its limits till it abutted on the Tamil Kingdoms of the far south. For three generations from the time of the founder the strong arm of the Mauryas ensured internal security and immunity from foreign aggression. Aśoka's vigorous propaganda further paved the way for the spread of Indian culture to distant Ceylon and the Hellenistic states almost to their furthest limits. It is not unreasonable to suppose that these favourable conditions were attended with a phenomenal development of industry as well as inland and foreign trade of the empire under Maurya rule.

Industry

The enormous advance of Indian industries which has just been postulated for the Nanda and Maurya times was rendered possible by the abundance of India's agricultural and mineral resources to which the Greek writers allude with evident admiration. 'India,' says Diodorus (ii. 35-7) quoting from Megasthenes, 'has many huge mountains which abound in fruit trees of every kind and many vast plains of great fertility—more or less beautiful, but all alike intersected by a multitude of rivers And while the soil bears on its surface all kinds of fruits, it has also underground numerous veins of all sorts of metals, for it contains much gold and silver and copper and iron in no small quantity and even tin and other metals. . . . India again

possesses many rivers both large and navigable¹. A no less important factor of economic progress noted likewise by the observant Greeks was the extraordinary skill of the Indian craftsman which has been his heritage down to our own times. Thus, to continue the quotation from Diodorus given above, 'The inhabitants are found to be well skilled in the arts.' Concrete instances of the skill of the Indian craftsmen are found in the *Geography* of Strabo (xv. 1.67) from information supplied by Nearchus². ✓

One of the oldest Indian industries is that of textile manufacture. The technical terms for warp (*tantu*) and woof (*otu*) are found in the *Rigveda* and *Atharva-veda*, while the shuttle (*tasara*) and the loom (*veman*) are mentioned in the *Yajus-samhitā* and other texts³. Among the textile industries, that of cotton manufacture held the first place. It found an excellent market at home in the habits of the people whose immemorial dress consisting of a pair of cotton garments is referred to alike in the early Buddhist texts and in the writings of the Greek observers⁴. No wonder then that among the presents offered by the Mālavas and their allies to the victorious Alexander was included a large quantity of cotton cloth. While the cotton industry evidently was spread over the whole land, certain centres had early become famous for the excellence of their fabrics. The early Buddhist texts speak with high praise of Benares cloth (*Kāsikuttama* or *Kāsika-vattha*) as well as the cloth of the Śivi country (*Siveyyaka* or *Siveyyaka*)⁵. We have a fuller list in Kauṭilya's *Arthasāstra* (ii. 11) where Madhurā (capital of the Pāṇḍya country), Aparānta (Konkan on the western coast), Kāśi, Vaṅga, Vatsa (Kauśāmbī region), and Mahiṣa are said to produce the best

1. According to the above account, gold, silver, copper and iron to a large extent along with tin and other metals to a much less degree were mined from India itself. Among the five sources of gold and five of silver specified in the *Arthasāstra* (ii. 13), however, Gauḍa alone can be definitely identified as belonging to India.

2. Thus we are told that Indian craftsmen, seeing sponges used for the first time by the Macedonians, immediately manufactured imitations of them with fine thread and wool. They also quickly learnt to make Greek articles such as the scrapers and oil flasks used by the athletes.

3. See *Vedic Index*, s.v.

4. See *P. T. S. Dictionary*, s. v. *kappāsa*, and Arrian's *Indica*, ch. xvi.

5. Cf. *Anguttara Nikāya* i. 248 : *Vinaya Piṭaka* i. 278, 280 : *Jātakas* iv. 401 : vi. 51 etc.

cotton fabrics (*kārpāsika*). In the same context, the *Arthaśāstra* specifically mentions three varieties of *dukūla* (an unidentified species of fibrous fabric) distinguished by their place of origin and their colour. These were the products of Vaṅga (East Bengal), Puṇḍra (North Bengal) and Suvarṇakuḍya (in Kāmarūpa). They were respectively white, dark and coloured like the rising sun. In the same connection, the *Arthaśāstra* mentions linen fabrics (*kshauma*) of Kāśī as well as Puṇḍra. Kauṭilya also refers to the fabrics produced in Magadha, Puṇḍra and Suvarṇakuḍya. Linen fabrics (*khoma*) are also referred to in the early Buddhist literature¹.

It will be noticed from the above that Bengal, Kāmarūpa and Benares were the regions noted thus early as centres of the textile industry. The technical perfection of the industry is well illustrated by the fact that the *Arthaśāstra* distinguishes varieties of *dukūla* and *kshauma* according to their colour and process of manufacture, while those of *patrorṇā* are distinguished according to their material and colour.

Coming to costlier textiles, we find references to silk cloth (*koseya* and *koseyya-pāvāra*) in the Pāli canonical works and the *Jātakas*². Kauṭilya (ii. 11) also mentions *kauseya* along with *chīna-paṭṭa chīna-bhūmija* (Chinese fabric of Chinese manufacture). This last passage points to the fact that silks of Chinese origin competed at this time with the home-made product.

On the other hand, the manufacture of wool was an old and indigenous industry. The fame of the fine wool of Gandhāri goes back to the *Ṛigveda* which also knows a woollen garment called *sāmulya*³. The woollen fabrics of Gandhāra along with those of Koṭumbara or Koḍumbara—a region connected by Jean Przyluski⁴ with the Audumbaras of the Punjab—are mentioned with high praise in the *Jātakas*⁵. Kauṭilya, while silent about Gandhāra, mentions by name (ii. 11) the woollen goods of Nepal called *bhīngisī* or *apasāraka*. These are said to be formed of eight pieces, dark in colour and rain-proof. What advance

1. See *P. T. S. Dict.*, s. v. *khoma*.

2. *Ibid.*, s. v.

3. See *Vedic Index*, s. v., for references.

4. *Un ancien peuple de Penjab ; Les Udumbara* in *J. As.*, 1926, pp. 25-36.

5. See *Jat.* vi. 500.

the manufacture of this material had attained during the period of the *Arthaśāstra* is proved by the fact that Kauṭilya specifies three varieties of fabrics of sheep's wool distinguished by colour, four varieties distinguished by their manufacturing process, and no less than ten varieties distinguished by their use for human beings and for animals. The qualities of the best wool are carefully noted by the author in the same connection. The *Arthaśāstra* also distinguishes in the same context six kinds of fabrics manufactured from the hair of wild animals, and differing in their uses and qualities.

Before closing the subject of textile manufacture, we may mention a few of its finer forms known at that period. The use of embroidered cloth (*peśas*) is as old as the *Rigveda*, its manufacture according to a *Yajus Samhitā* text being normally carried on by women¹. The *Jātakas* refer to golden turbans used by kings and golden trappings for the use of State elephants². In the times of the Nandas and the Mauryas, gold-embroidered garments were worn by Indians evidently of the richer class. This is borne out by the testimony of Strabo, who says (xv. 1.54). 'They (the Indians) wear apparel embroidered with gold and use ornaments set with precious stones and gay-coloured linen garments³.' These gorgeous dresses were specially displayed during festive occasions. Describing the festive processions of the Indians, Strabo (xv.1. 69) mentions not only the train of elephants adorned with gold and silver, but also the attendants wearing 'garments embroidered and inter-woven with gold.' Curtius, again, in the course of his description of the Indian king's public appearance, says that the king is 'robed in fine muslin embroidered with purple and gold.'

Wood-work is a very old Indian industry. Reference to the carpenter (*takshan* or *tashṭri*) and his tools may be traced back to the *Rigveda*⁴. The art of the carpenter had attained a high skill by the time of the Pāli canonical and other texts. There

1. See *Vedic Index*, s.v. *peśas*.

2. *Jāt.* iv 404 : v. 322.

3. Somewhat different is McCrindle's translation which is as follows ; (*Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, Calcutta ed., p. 69) :— 'Their robes are worked in gold and ornamented with precious stones and they wear also flowered garments made of the finest muslin.'

4. See *Vedic Index*, s.v.

we find the *vaddhaki* engaged in all kinds of wood-work including ship-building, the making of carts and chariots, the manufacture of machines and house-building¹. To the absolute perfection of the craft in Maurya times we have a surviving testimony in the shape of the mysterious wooden platforms that have been recently dug up in the vicinity of Patna². The excellent sculpture of Aśoka's time is admittedly modelled upon the much older art of the indigenous craftsmen in wood and ivory.

Reference has just been made to the Indian ivory-worker. The Indians have excelled in ivory-work from early times down to the present. Specially, in the *Jātakas* we are introduced to various ornamental and useful articles prepared from this costly material³. The use of ivory ear-rings is noted by Arrian (*Indica* xvi) as a characteristic of very wealthy Indians.

Another industry in which Indians have distinguished themselves in ancient and mediaeval as in modern times is stone-cutting. In the *Jātakas* the stone-cutter (*pāsāṇa-kottaka*) is found engaged in building houses with the materials of a ruined village, in hollowing a cavity in a block of the purest crystal and so forth⁴. The wonderful stone pillars of Aśoka's reign are standing examples of the unsurpassed skill of the stone-cutters of the age. 'The art of polishing hard stone,' as Vincent Smith observes⁵, 'was carried to such perfection that it is said to have become a lost art beyond modern powers.' The 'Mauryan polish' is seen at its best in the walls of the Barabar caves of the hardest gneiss rock, which are burnished like glass mirrors.

The use of deer and goat skins for clothing is as old as the *Rigveda*⁶. The leather-worker and his handiwork of various kinds are referred to in the early Buddhist literature⁷. Kautilya's

1. See *P. T. S. Dict.*, s.v. *vaddhaki*. : also cf. *Jāt.* ii. 18 (for house-building) : v. 159 : vi. 427 (for ship-building) : iv. 207 (for carts and chariots) : v. 242 (for machines).

2. *Ann. Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.*, 1912-13, pp. 53 ff.

3. See *P. T. S. Dict.*, s.v. *danta* cf. *Jāt.* v. 302 (for ivory handle of a glass mirror) : vi. 223 (for an ivory chariot).

4. *Jāt.* I, 470.

5. *Oxford History of India*, Part I, 2nd ed., p. 113.

6. See *Vedic Index*, s.v. *ajina*.

7. See *P. T. S. Dict.*, s.v. *upāhānā* and *chamma* : cf. also *Jāt.* ii. 153 (for traps of leather) : iii. 79 (for single soled shoes) : iii. 116 and vi. 431 (for leather sacks) : vi. 454 (for leather shield). etc.

Arthaśāstra (ii. 11) shows knowledge of a wide variety of skins (*charma*) distinguished by their place of origin as well as colour and size. It is interesting to observe that the principal varieties are said to be products of various Himalayan regions. In the description of the Indian dress by Arrian (*Indica* xvi), to which we have referred above, we have an incidental allusion to the skill of the Indian leather-worker. 'The Indians,' we are told, 'wear shoes made of white leather and these are elaborately trimmed, while the soles are variegated.'

India has always been famous for its trees producing fragrant wood. Several varieties such as *chandana*, *agalu* and *ṭagara* are mentioned in the Pāli canonical texts and the *Jātakas*¹. Kauṭilya (ii. 11) mentions five kinds of fragrant wood, viz., *chandana aguru*, *taila-parṇika*, *bhadraśrī*, and *kāleyaka*. These are further distinguished according to their place of origin, colour, fragrance and so forth. To judge from the commentator's identification, many of these varieties came from Kāmarūpa, while other kinds came from Ceylon, the Himalayan region and the like.

The use of metals may be traced back to the Indus people of pre-historic times. The Vedic Indians were acquainted with a large variety of metals, viz. gold (*chandra*, *jātarūpa*, *hiranya*, *suvarṇa*, *harita*), silver (*rajata*), iron (*kṛishṇāyasa*, *śyāma*), copper (*lohitāyasa*, *loha*), lead (*sīsa*) and tin (*trapu*). Mention is also made of gold and silver ornaments as well as ordinary metalware². The *Jātakas* refer not only to numerous metals including brass and bronze, but also to the manufacture of ornaments from precious metals and that of domestic and agricultural implements from baser ones³. Kauṭilya (ii. 12) specifies the characteristics of various metallic ores including gold, silver, copper, lead, tin, iron and *vaikṛintaka* (unidentified). What is more, he refers to technical sciences dealing with veins of ore and metals, to the art of smelting metals and so forth⁴. In this connection, reference is made to the manufacture of copper, lead, tin, bronze,

1. See *P. T. S. Dict.*, s.v.

2. See *Vedic Index* s.v., and *ibid*, English index, s.v. *metals and ornaments* for references.

3. See *Jāt.* i. 351 : iv. 60, 85, 296 etc.

4. *Sulba-dhātusāstra-rasa-pāka-manirāga* in the original, rendered as above by Meyer. The translation of Shamasastri is inaccurate.

brass, iron and other wares. In the following chapters (ii. 13 and 14), Kauṭilya deals with the characteristic qualities of several varieties of gold and silver together with the methods of their testing and purification, as well as the technical processes of their manufacture. These striking references may be taken effectually to dispose of the strange verdict of a Greek writer who, while describing the richness of the country in gold and silver mines, observes : 'Nevertheless the Indians, inexperienced in the art of mining and smelting, do not even know their own resources, but set about their business in too primitive a way¹.'

As regards the period of the Nandas and the Mauryas, we have positive evidence testifying to the skill of the Indian metal worker. From this standpoint the bare observation of Diodorus (ii. 36) based no doubt on Megasthenes, *viz.* that the Indians employed their rich store of metals in manufacturing articles of use and ornaments is not of much moment. More significant is the fact that among the presents offered to Alexander by the Mālavas and their allies were included a hundred talents of 'white iron' (*ferrum candidum*). This has been generally taken to mean steel, although Cunningham² identified it with nickel. Of the copper work of the Maurya times, an excellent specimen has survived in the shape of a solid copper bolt which was found in the Aśokan pillar at Rampurva and was evidently used for fixing the colossal lion-capital to the pillar itself³. The Greek contemporary accounts also testify to the precious metal-work used in the royal court. In Strabo's description (xv. 1.69) of the Indian festive processions to which we have referred above, we read how the great host of royal attendants carried 'vessels of gold such as large basins and goblets six feet in breadth,' as well as 'drinking cups and lavers all made of Indian copper and set many of them with precious stones,—emeralds, beryls, and Indian garnets.' Similarly Curtius, in describing the king's public appearance, states how the royal attendants 'carry in their hands silver censers', while

1. Strabo xv. 1.31.

2. *Num. Chron.*, xiii (1873), pp. 188 ff.

3. For a description of the copper-bolt with an accompanying photograph, see Panchanan Neogi, *Copper in Ancient India*. pp. 18-20.

the king himself 'lolls in a golden palanquin furnished with pearls which dangle all around it.'

The use of jewellery may be traced back to the Indus peoples of prehistoric times. The profession of a jeweller (*maṅikara*) is referred to in the *Vājasaneyi-Samhitā* and the *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*¹. Coming to post-Vedic times, we find the *Jātakas* referring to pearls, crystals and jewels as well as the art of cutting and polishing gems for ornaments². Kauṭilya (ii. 11) shows acquaintance with pearls (*muktika*), jewels (*maṇi*), diamonds (*vajra*) and corals (*pravāla*) of Indian as well as foreign origin. What is more, he carefully notes the characteristics of good and bad pearls as well as the different colours and qualities of rubies, beryls, sapphires, crystals, diamonds and corals. The skill of the manufacturing jeweller is indicated by the fact that Kauṭilya mentions no less than five varieties of pearl necklaces (*yashṭi*) which are sub-divided into other classes. In a postscript, he adds that the same varieties apply to the ornaments for the head, arms, feet and waist. Coming definitely to the Nanda-Maurya times we find that the Indian love of ornaments is pointedly referred to by a Greek writer³.

We have not space enough to describe the other industries to which the *Jātakas* and other records of this period bear witness, such as the manufacture of dyes, gums, drugs and perfumes, as well as that of pottery. But a word may be said about the manufacture of implements and weapons of war. Offensive and defensive weapons like the bow and the arrow, the sword and the spear, the helmet and the coat of mail are known from Vedic times⁴. Later in the *Arthasāstra* (ii. 18), we find mention of bows and arrows made of different materials along with different kinds of swords, axes, spears and the like. The *Arthasāstra* also refers to two classes of war machines, viz. immovable (*sthītayantrāṇi*) and movable (*chala-yantrāṇi*), the first consisting of ten and the second of seventeen named varieties. The Greek accounts relating specifically to the Nanda-Maurya

1. See *Vedic Index*. s.v.

2. Cf. *Jāt.* i. 351, 479 : ii. 6 : iv. 60, 85, 296 : vi. 117-20, 279.

3. See Strabo xv, 1.

4. See *Vedic Index*, English index, s.v. *war* for references.

times bear out these observations. According to Arrian (*Indica* xvi), the Indian foot-soldiers were armed with bows and javelins as well as broad-bladed swords, while the horsemen carried two lances. In the list of presents offered by the Mālavas and their allies to Alexander were included 1050 (or, according to another account, 500) four-horsed chariots and 1000 bucklers.

Trade

By the time of the early Buddhist literature the Indians had developed an extensive system of inland trade which was borne along well-known trade-routes. These routes were marked by convenient stages and served to link up the most distant parts of the country with one another. Among them we may mention specifically the following :—

1. East to west. This most important route ran principally along the great rivers. From Champā boats plied up to Benares, the great industrial and trading centre of those times. From Benares they led up the Ganges as far as Sahajāti and up the Jumna as far as Kauśāmbī. Further west the route led by land-tracts to Sindhu, famous for its breed of horses and Sauvira ('Sophir' or 'Ophir' of the Old Testament ?).
2. North to south-west. This route extended from Śrāvastī, the famous capital of Kosala, to Pratiśṭhāna on the Godāvārī and the stations lying on it in the reverse direction included Ujjayinī, Vidiśā and Kauśāmbī.
3. North to south-east. Along this route which ran from Śrāvastī to Rājagṛiha lay a number of stations including Kapilavastu, Vaiśālī, Pāṭaliputra and Nālandā.
4. North-west route, also referred to by Pāṇini¹. It stretched along the land of the Five Rivers to the great highways of Central and Western Asia.

We also hear of merchants travelling from Kashmir and Gandhāra to Videha, from Benares to Ujjayinī, from Magadha to Sauvira and so forth². What vast wealth accrued from this system of inland trade is illustrated by references to merchant

1. V. 1.17 :—*Uttarapathenāhṛtaṁ ca*.

2. Cf. *Jāt.* ii. 248 : iii. 365 : *Vimānavatthu* commentary 370 etc.

princes like Anāthapiṇḍika of Śrāvastī whose trading connections extended to Rājagriha on the one side and Kāśī on the other. Nevertheless, the path of the trader was anything but easy. Not only were the roads (specially through the forests) infested by robbers against whom the merchants protected themselves by hiring the services of forest-guards, but the deserts had to be crossed at night 'with the help of land-pilots (*thala-niyāmaka*) guiding the caravan by the stars. Associated with the wilderness was a host of real and imaginary dangers viz., drought, famine, wild beasts, robbers and demons. Some of the roads were already distinguished as 'royal' or 'great' roads (*rājapatha* or *mahāmagga*) unlike the ordinary bye-paths (*upapatha*). But the rivers were not bridged and had to be crossed by ferries. The overland as well as oversea trade likewise attracted the attention of Indian merchants. The Pāli canonical texts speak of voyages lasting six months in ships (*nāvā*) which could be drawn up on shore in the winter¹. The *Jātakas*, above all, have preserved memories of voyages of daring Indian merchants beyond the seas and lands to distant countries of the east and west. References are made in these works to merchants voyaging from Champā or even Benares to the mysterious land of Suvarṇabhūmi which has been proved to be a generic title in those days for Burma, the Malay Peninsula and the Malay Archipelago. We hear even of merchants voyaging from the great western seaport Bharukachchha to the same destination, obviously *via* a Ceylonese port. Indeed, Ceylon (Tambapaṇṇi) at that time was 'another bourne of oversea commerce'. We also learn how another body of merchants travelled from Benares to Bāveru (Babylon)². An interesting sidelight is thrown upon the methods of Indian navigation by the reference to the direction-giving crows (*disā-kāka*) showing the navigators as they flew towards the land, in what direction lay the coast³. This practice, as has been remarked⁴, was also known to the sea-faring Babylonians and Phoenicians of early times.

The references in Kauṭilya's *Arthasāstra*, scattered and incidental as they are, register some advance in the conditions of

1. Cf. *Sam. N.* III p. 155 : *Ibid.* v p. 51 : *Ang. N.* iv. p. 127.

2. Cf. *Jāt.* iv. 15-7 : vi. 34 : iii. 126 ff.

3. Cf. *Jāt.* iii. 126-7, 267 etc.

4. See Fick. *op. cit.*, Eng. tr. p. 269.

trade above described. Active encouragement of trade on the part of the State is proved by the care with which Kauṭilya provides for the construction and security of trade-routes and the foundations of market-towns in his scheme of State colonisation of the country-part. Elsewhere (ii. 4), the largest scale of width—eight *daṇḍas* as compared with the usual four *daṇḍas*—is prescribed for roads leading to the market-towns (*saṁyānīya patha*). Intelligent appreciation of the importance of trade-routes is shown by the discussion in *Arthaśāstra* circles (vii. 12) of the relative advantages of different types of trade-routes from the standpoint of their conduciveness to commerce. Such are the pairs: land and water-routes, water-routes along the coast and through mid-water, the Himalayan and the southern land-routes. In comparing the last pair, the *Arthaśāstra* authors give us a valuable, though far from exhaustive, list of the imports borne along both routes evidently to the Ganges valley. According to an un-named teacher quoted by Kauṭilya, the costlier merchandise consisting of elephants, horses, fragrant products, tusks, skins, gold and silver were more plentiful in the Himalayas. In Kauṭilya's opinion, on the other hand, the merchandise other than blankets, skins and horses, and consisting of conch-shells, diamonds, jewels, pearls and gold, was more plentiful in the South. For the rest, the remarkable lists of agricultural, manufacturing and other products of different lands which Kauṭilya mentions (ii. 11-12) testify to the extent as well as the objects of India's internal and foreign trade. Among these products are found textiles of Bengal, Assam, Benares, the Konkan and Pāṇḍya, the silks of China, the woollens of Nepal, the skins of the Himalayan regions, the fragrant wood of Assam, Ceylon (?) and the Himalayas, the gems of Ceylon (?), Alakanda and Vivarna (unidentified) and the like¹.

All indications point to the fact that the rise of the Nandas and the Mauryas helped greatly to improve India's inland and foreign trade. The liberation of the Indus valley, and still more the repulse of Seleucus, gave Chandragupta Maurya complete

1. It is interesting to recall Pāṇini's *sūtra* vi. 2.13 referring to the practice of merchants being named from the countries which they visited. The late *Kāśikā* commentary gives the following illustrations of the above :—

Madra-vāṇija, *Kāśmīra-vāṇija* and *Gandhāra-vāṇija*.

control over the coveted north-western route to which we have referred above. With the conquest of the Deccan by Chandragupta Maurya or Bindusāra, the possession of the equally, or still more, valuable western and southern routes was ensured to the Mauryas. The conquest of Kalinga by Aśoka destroyed the only possible rival for the mastery of the eastern trade. While the Mauryas thus brought all the great inland trade-routes under the control of a highly centralised and efficient administration, their rule was helpful for the growth of trade in other ways. That the Mauryas had a special department for the construction of roads is proved by Megasthenes' reference (quoted, Strabo xv.1.50) to the duties of officers called *Agoranomoi* ('market commissioners'). They had, among other duties, to 'construct roads and at every ten *stadia* set up a pillar to show the bye-roads and distances.' The most renowned of the imperial roads of these times was 'the Royal Road' connecting the North-West Frontier with Pāṭaliputra and leading thence to the mouths of the Ganges. The stages of this first Indian Grand Trunk Road together with their distances have been recorded by the Roman writer Pliny in his encyclopaedic work called *Natural History* (vi. 21). His somewhat confused account may be summed up in the following table¹ :—

	Roman miles
From Peuce-laotis (Pushkarāvati) to the Indus	60
Thence to the Hydaspes (Jhelum) ..	60
Thence to the Hyphasis (Beas)	270
From the Hyphasis to the Hesidrus (Sutlej)	168
From the Hesidrus to the Jomanes (Jumna)	168 (<i>sic</i>)
From the Jomanes to the Ganges ..	112
From the Ganges to Rhodopha (unidentified)	119
From Rhodopha to Kalinipaxa (unidentified)	167 (or 265)
From Kalinipaxa to the confluence of the Jomanes and the Ganges	625 (<i>sic</i>)

1. For a useful summary of the discussion relating to Pliny's account see McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, Calcutta ed., pp. 130-34. Arrian (*Indica*, ch. iii) quotes Eratosthenes to say that the Royal Road was measured by *schoeni*. According to Pliny, (Arrian's *Indica*, E. J. Chinnock's tr. p. 401n) the *schoenus* was reckoned by Eratosthenes at 40 *stadia* (about five miles). Strabo (*Geography* xv. 1.11) mentions measurement of the Royal Road 'with necessary lines', which by a slight emendation of the text may be taken to mean 'in terms of the *schoenus*' (Loeb's Classical Library ed., Vol. viii. p. 17n).

From the confluence to Palibothra	..	425 (<i>sic</i>)
From Palibothra to the mouths of the Ganges		638

We have reasons to believe that the ancient foreign trade of India, like its inland trade, benefited by the strong and efficient administration of the Mauryas. The wise policy of friendship with the Hellenistic powers started by Chandragupta Maurya after the repulse of Seleucus and maintained by his son and grandson, must have favoured the expansion of the Indian trade with West Asia and Egypt. It is interesting to learn from Greek classical sources that the main commerce between the early Seleucid Empire and India was borne partly by the land-route (the northern one passing through Bactria and the southern through Gedrosia and Carmania, Persis and Susiana) and partly by the sea-route (through Gerrha on the west coast of the Persian Gulf). Like the Indian route to Egypt stretching along the east shore of the Red Sea, the route through the Persian Gulf was controlled by powerful Arab tribes engaged in a highly developed trade¹. How valuable was this western trade to India will appear from the list of her exports into Egypt, which, according to Greek classical sources, consisted of ivory, tortoise-shell, pearls, pigments and dyes (specially indigo), nard, costum, malabathron and rare woods². It is probably in the light of this extensive commerce with western lands that we have to understand Aśoka's ambitious attempt to extend the benefits of his religious and humanitarian propaganda to the Hellenistic kingdoms almost to their furthest limits. To the mutual knowledge and understanding derived from long-continued commercial intercourse, again, we may probably attribute the success which

1. For references see Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, p. 457.

2. Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.*, pp. 386-7. We have an interesting reminiscence of Indians sharing in this western trade in a story narrated by Posidonius and quoted by Strabo in his *Geography* (ii. 3.4). According to this story while Euergetes II (145-116 B.C.) was reigning in Egypt, an Indian being stranded on the shore of the Arabian Sea was brought to Alexandria and having learnt Greek gave the Court information of the sea-route to India. Then the king sent out an expedition under Eudoxus of Cyzicus. The expedition set out probably in the last years of Euergetes II and returned heavily laden with goods. Equal success attended a second expedition sent out under the same captain in the following reign. It has been recently suggested on good grounds that the discovery of the monsoon attributed to Hippalus in the literary records was made by Eudoxus himself who probably derived his information from the stranded Indian merchant and undertook his first expedition with his help. On the whole subject, see Rostovtzeff, *op. cit.* pp. 926, 927, 929.

attended Aśoka's mission to Ceylon and, if this can be taken to be authentic, the mission of Soṇa and Uttara to Suvaṇṇabhūmī (Further India).

The Organisation of Industry and Trade

The organisation of crafts and trades in some forms of association was known from early times. In so far as the crafts are concerned, we find in the *Jātakas* that sons ordinarily, if not invariably, followed the occupations of their father, while the industries used to be localised in towns and villages, and the separate crafts had frequently a *pamukha* (president) or *jeṭṭha* (alderman) presiding over them. These three features, as Fick observed long ago¹, point to an organisation similar to that of the craft-guilds in mediaeval Europe. The *Jātakas* in fact refer to eighteen *seṇis* (guilds), mentioning four by name, viz., those of woodcutters, smiths, leather dressers and painters². As regards the organisation of trade, the *Jātakas* refer to *satthavāhas* whose directions were obeyed by the caravans along the trade-routes as well as to *pamukhas* and *jeṭṭhas* of the separate trades. We also hear of disputes between guilds being decided by a *mahāseṭṭhi* who acted practically as 'chief alderman over the aldermen of the guilds³.' The early *Dharmaśāstras* and the *Arthaśāstra* register a somewhat advanced stage of development. From an oft-quoted passage (xi 1) of Gautama's *Dharmasūtra* supposed to be the oldest of the existing *Dharmasūtras*, we learn that traders and artisans along with others had the authority to lay down rules for their respective classes. Of the *Sanḅhas* ('corporations') described by Kauṭilya (xi. 1), who were ruled by *mukhyas* ('executive officers'), one class consisted of certain specified and unspecified groups living by *vārtā* (agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade) as well as by *śāstra* (fighting). Elsewhere (ii. 7, iii. 1, viii. 4 etc.) Kauṭilya refers to *seṇis* (guilds) organised under *mukhyas*, which were thought to be sufficiently important for their customs to be recorded in official registers and were otherwise a factor to be reckoned with in the working of the State administration.

1. *The Social Organisation in North-east India in Buddha's time* (Eng. tr. of *Die Social Gliederung in Nordostlichen Indian zu Buddhas zeit*), pp. 177-183.

2. Cf. *Jāt.* i. 267, 314 : iii. 281 : iv. 411 : vi 22.

3. Cf. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 97.

The industrial and commercial *śreṇīs* and *saṅghas* we have described above represent the type of guild organisation under which there could be little scope for a separate class of wage-earners as distinguished from producers. But already in these times we hear of another type of organisation involving the employment of hired labourers by the capitalists. The *Jātakas* make frequent references to free labourers working for hire (*kammakara* and *bhatakas*) often along with slaves (*dāsas*) and servants (*peśsas*)¹. Kauṭilya (iii. 13-14) not only refers to free labourers (*karmakaras* and *bhritakas*) along with slaves (*dāsas*), but gives a whole body of laws for regulating their work and wages. That the free labourers along with slaves formed an important element of the population in Maurya times is proved by Aśoka including the kind treatment of *dāsas* and *bhatakas* among the constituent qualities of his *dhamma* (R. E. ix, xi etc.)

State Industrial and Commercial Policy

No account of the economic conditions of the Nanda-Maurya times will be complete without some reference to the policy pursued by the State in relation to industry and trade. We may begin by noticing some features of the traditional policy in these respects as reflected in the *Arthaśāstra*. That the active encouragement of industry and commerce was contemplated as a duty of the State is illustrated by the measures included in Kauṭilya's scheme of State colonisation of rural areas (ii. 1) : they include the working of mines and forests, the construction and security of trade-routes and the foundation of market-towns. In this connection the king is enjoined to secure trade-routes from obstruction by his favourites (*vallabhas*), officers (*kārmikas*) and frontier guards (*anta-pālas*) as well as by thieves and animal herds—a list sufficiently instructive as putting the danger from the King's officers on a level with that caused by thieves and animals. How fully the industrial and commercial classes were associated with the royal court and capital is proved by the immediately following rules (ii. 4) relating to the planned settlement of the fortified capital (*durga*). According to this description which, by the way, illustrates the relative social status of

1. See *P. T. S. Dict.*, s.v. Also cf. Fick, *op. cit.* pp. 303-4.

different groups of artisans and traders in the times concerned, the dealers in scents, garlands, paddy etc. and the chief artisans should live along with Kshatriyas to the east of the royal palace. The dealers in cooked food, liquors and flesh should live along with Vaiśyas to the south. The manufacturers of woollen and cotton goods, the armour-makers etc. should live along with Śūdras on the west. The manufacturers of base metals and precious stones should live along with Brāhmaṇas on the north.

Not only did the State associate itself closely with the trading and industrial classes, but it also undertook manufactures and trading on its own account¹. What is more, the rules of the *Arthaśāstra* repeatedly show how thoroughly the agricultural, mineral and other resources of the State were understood to be the sources of its strength. Thus among the qualities of a good country are included (vi. 1) the possession of agricultural tracts, mines, forests of various kinds, land and waterways and the like. Very characteristic again, is the general rule of foreign policy (vii. 1) stating that the king should follow that one of the six-fold forms by which he can exploit his own mines and forests and obstruct those of his enemy. No wonder, then, that the nice balancing of the advantages of working tracts rich in mines and in food grains, of working mines yielding a precious but small output and those producing inferior but large output, of working trade-routes by land and water and so forth, formed the subject of keen discussion in *Arthaśāstra* circles dealing with questions of foreign policy (vii. 11-12).

Another aspect of State industrial policy in these times is that relating to the strict control of artisans and traders. We have in the *Arthaśāstra* a whole Section (Section iv) significantly called 'Removal of Thorns' (*kaṇṭaka śodhanam*), which describes successively the measures to be taken by the king for securing the people against artisans and merchants, against natural calamities, against persons living by clandestine means and so forth. In thorough accord with this attitude is the fact that elsewhere

1. For examples see *Contributions to the History of the Hindu Revenue System*, pp. 73, 77, 90-1, 106 8. In the chapter (v. 3) describing what may be called the expenses of the king's establishment, we have the following rates of pay :—

Carpenters—2,000 *paṇas*.

Skilled and unskilled craftsmen—120 *paṇas*.

(iv. 1), Kauṭilya characterises merchants, artisans and some other specified classes as thieves in fact, though not in name. In the class of artisans just mentioned, are included weavers, washermen, goldsmiths, workers in copper and other metals, physicians, actors, minstrels and beggars. How drastically paternal the State regulations for protection of the public against these classes sometimes might be, is proved by a number of examples. Not only is a differential scale of wages fixed for weaving different kinds of cloth, but fines and other penalties are prescribed for reduction in their weight and measures. Fines are also prescribed for washermen washing clothes elsewhere than on wooden planks or on smooth stone, for wearing clothes other than those marked with a cudgel, for selling, mortgaging or hiring clothes of others, and even for delay in returning the clothes. Wages at varying rates are laid down for dyeing different qualities of cloth. A scale of penalties is laid down for physicians failing in or neglecting the treatment of diseases.

The measures for public security (iv. 2) against traders partake of the same character. We read that such old wares as are of proved ownership should be sold or mortgaged at the market-place (*panya-samsthā*) under supervision of the market-superintendent (*samsthādhyaksha*). A graduated scale of fines is prescribed for deficiency in weights and measures. There is a similar scale of fines for exceeding the profit-limit of five per cent permitted on home-grown merchandise and of ten per cent allowed on foreign merchandise. In a later chapter of the same section (iv. 4) dealing with lost and stolen property, we are pointedly told that the sale or mortgage of old wares should not be carried out without informing the market-superintendent. It is characteristic of Kauṭilya's attitude towards traders (*vaidehaka*) that unlike an unnamed *Arthaśāstra* authority whom he quotes, he thinks (viii. 4) the oppression from traders to be worse even than that caused by the Guardian of the Frontier (*antapāla*).

On the other hand it is only fair to add that the State in these times also took special steps to protect the artisans and merchants. For theft of small articles belonging to artisans and craftsmen, Kauṭilya prescribes (iv. 10) fines as high as 100 *paṇas*. Elsewhere (iv. 13) he lays down elaborate rules for

compensating merchants (*sārthika*) for theft or robbery of their merchandise during their journeys.

The Mauryas followed the traditional State policy in relation to industry and trade at least in some important respects. We have already seen what care they bestowed upon the construction of roads through a special class of officers called *Agoranomoi* by Megasthenes. That they established State manufactures on their own account is proved by Megasthenes' reference to his fourth Indian caste, viz. that of artisans. Speaking of this class, Diodorus (ii. 41) says that they were not only exempted from paying taxes, but even received maintenance from the Royal exchequer. More guardedly Arrian (*Indica* Ch. xii) states that while handicraftsmen and retail dealers pay tribute, an exception is made in favour of makers of weapons of war, ship-builders and sailors, who even draw pay from the State. Evidently, the artisans maintained by the State were employed on government service. What strict control was maintained by the Maurya government over the artisans and merchants alike of the country-side and of the capital is proved by other statements of Megasthenes. We learn that the *Agoranomoi* had among other duties, to superintend crafts connected with land such as those of the wood-cutters, carpenters, blacksmiths and miners. Again, the officers known as *Astynomoi* ('city commissioners') were divided into six boards. Of these the fourth 'is that which has to do with sales and barter, and these look after the measure, and the fruits of the season, that the latter may be sold by stamp': the fifth 'is that of those who have charge of the works made by artisans and sell these by stamps, the new apart from the old'¹. We have elsewhere² given reasons for identifying Megasthenes' officers in charge of measures with Kauṭilya's *pautavādhyaksha* ('superintendent of weights and measures') and *samsthādhyaksha* ('market superintendent'), while connecting 'the stamp' mentioned by the Greek writer with the *abhijñāna-mudrā*, which according to *Arthaśāstra* (ii. 27) was given by the *antopāla* to incoming traders. We have finally to mention in the present place another reference suggesting that the person of the artisans

1. Strabo. xv. 1.50-51, tr. the Loeb Classical Library, Vol. vii, pp. 83-4.

2. *Contributions to the History of the Hindu Revenue System*, p. 117.

was protected by a special law unlike the general rule of law known to the *Arthaśāstra*. According to Strabo (xv. 1.54), if a person caused the loss of a hand or an eye to a craftsman, he was put to death. This is a severe departure from the milder rule of law in the *Arthaśāstra* (iii. 19) imposing fines alone for the same offences.

Currency

Long before the rise of the Nandas and the Mauryas India had evolved her own monetary system based on the indigenous standards. The Vedic *nishka*, *śatamāna* and *suvarṇa* may have been ingots of gold of definite weights. But in later works such as the *Jātakas*, the grammar of Pāṇini and the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, we have definite references to gold coins called *nishka* and *suvarṇa*, silver coins called *kārshāpaṇas* or *dharāṇas* and copper coins also called *kārshāpaṇas*, along with their multiples and sub-divisions. The Vedic *śatamāna*, as its name implies, was based on the *māna* unit, a weight known to the *Rigveda*. In later times the *māna* was changed for the lighter unit called *krishṇala* or *rati*, the seed of the *guñja*-berry. The weight of the gold *suvarṇa* in the *Arthaśāstra* as well as in Manu and Yājñavalkya is given as 80 *guñjas* or *ratis*, the copper *kārshāpaṇa* according to Manu and Yājñavalkya also weighing 80 *ratis*. The weight of the silver *dharāṇas* in the *Arthaśāstra*, however, amounts very nearly to 80 *ratis*, while in Manu and Yājñavalkya it is only 32 *ratis*¹. As Professor Rapson has well observed², the silver and copper coinages in Ancient India were often independent of each other, with different areas of circulation. In the *Arthaśāstra*, however, the silver *paṇa* with its sub-divisions is evidently recognised as the standard coin, while the copper *māshaka* with its divisions ranks as a token currency. Apparently copper was linked up with silver in such a way that the *māshaka* was one-sixteenth in value of the silver *paṇa*, its weight varying with the ratio between the two metals³.

1. On the antiquity of the Indian coinage and its evolution, see D. R. Bhandarkar, *Ancient Indian Numismatics*, Lecture ii : S. K. Chakravorty, *Ancient Indian Numismatics*, Chs. ii. and iv. On the origin of the 32 *rati* standard for silver coins, see Bhandarkar *op. cit.*, pp. 93—4 and specially Chakravorty *op. cit.*, pp. 43 ff.

2. *Catalogue of Indian Coins in the British Museum*, p. clxxix.

3. Chakravorty, *op. cit.*, 56-8.

The punch-marked silver coins that have been found in large numbers all over India have been identified on all hands with the silver *kārshāpaṇas*, *dharāṇas* or *purāṇas* of the Smṛitis and the *Arthaśāstra*. Some classes of these coins have been traced back to pre-Mauryan times. Thus a distinctive class of such coins, which was found some years ago in a deposit at Paila in the Kheri district of the Uttar Pradesh, has been generally identified as the local currency of the independent Kosala kingdom before its absorption by Magadha. These coins bear four obverse marks instead of the usual five, among which is included the four-spoked wheel in place of the usual five-spoked one. They are of the reduced standard of 24 to 30 *ratis* in place of the theoretical 32 *ratis*¹. Of the punch-marked silver coins bearing the usual number of five obverse marks, two distinct classes assignable to as many distinct periods have been recovered from recent excavations on the site of Taxila. The Older Class is dated *circa* 317 B.C. by the presence in its midst of gold coins of Alexander and his half-brother Philip Arrhidaeus 'in mint condition,' while the date of the Later Class is fixed at *circa* 248 B.C. by the occurrence of a coin of Diodotus in the same deposit. The two classes are distinguished from each other by their fabric as well as symbols, though equally approximating to the standard of 32 *ratis*. The Older (pre-Maurya) Class consists of large thin pieces unlike the small thick coins of the Later (Maurya) Class. The obverse marks of the Older Class are conspicuously lacking in the distinctive Maurya symbols ('hill and crescent' as well as 'peacock'). It seems to be generally agreed that some coins of the Older Class go back to the 4th or even the 5th century B.C.². On the other hand, it must be admitted that the

1. On the above see Durga Prasad, *Num. Supp.* xvii. p. 77 ; Walsh, *JNSI.*, No. ii. p. 15-26 : *JRAS.* 1937, pp. 300-303. Walsh gives the average weight of the Paila hoard as 25 *ratis*, but see D. D. Kosambi, *NIA.* iv. p. 56.

2. Thus Durga Prasad, *Num. Supp.* xlv. Pl. viii and *ibid.* xvii, pp. 78-9, takes some early silver punch-marked coins to go back to the kingdom of Magadha shortly after Buddha's time. According to Walsh (*JBORS.* 1937, pp. 303-4), some very old coins of the Taxila Hoard which were re-stamped for circulation may go back to 200 years or more before the date of the deposit, viz., c. 317 B.C. More recently D. D. Kosambi (*op. cit.*, pp. 60-6) premising that the early coins of Taxila were imported from the east, assigns some select types on the basis of his interpretation of the obverse marks to Śaśunāga and Nanda kings.

symbolism and metrology of the silver punch-marked coins are still an unsolved problem¹.

In circulation with the Older Class of silver coins just described, though probably dating from much earlier times, was a class of coins consisting of thick slightly bent bars of silver with 'the six-armed symbol' on the obverse and a blank reverse. Weighing from 165.8 to 173 grains, these *śalākā* coins, as they have been called, have been sometimes identified² with the *śatamāna* of 100 *ratis*. Specimens of this coinage have been found in denominations of one-half, one-fourth, one-eighth and one-sixteenth pieces. Other classes of coins of the same early type comprising (as they have been called) single and double *kārshāpaṇas* or only half *kārshāpaṇas* have been found in deposits from western India and an unrecorded provenance in northern India³.

To the same period as the Older Class of silver punch-marked coins as well as the bent bar coins belongs, if we are to judge from their simultaneous occurrence in the same Taxila deposit of c. 317 B.C., a group of minute silver coins with a single obverse mark and a blank reverse⁴. They have been found not only on the site of Taxila, but also at Thathari in the Madhya Pradesh⁵.

1. On different interpretations of the obverse marks, see Durga Prasad, *JASB*, N. S. XXX(1934), pp. 17 ff. : Walsh, *Punch-marked Coins from Taxila*, pp. 18-25 : D.D. Kosambi, *op. cit.*, pp. 2 ff. Regarding metrology A. S. Hemmy (*JRAS*, 1937, pp. 1-26) concluded after an elaborate examination that the silver punch-marked coins conform to the weight-standard of 54 grains, which is exactly one-quarter of the principal weight of the revised Indus system of weights, and nominally represents Manu's standard of 32 *ratis* (58.56 grains). Criticising this view, D. D. Kosambi concludes (*op. cit.* pp. 58-9) that the system of Mohenjodaro weights was applied for the earlier Taxilan hoard, while in the Maurya period although the average remained the same, the variance increased enormously thus pointing to a far cruder system than before.

2. See Durga Prasad, *Num. Supp.* xlvii, pp. 86-7. This view is contradicted by D. D. Kosambi, *op. cit.*, p. 19. On the other hand, Mr. Charan Das Chatterji in his paper *Numismatic data in Pali literature (Buddhist Studies, p. 426 n)* suggests that the bent bar coins were struck on the *karsha* of 100 *ratis* known to Yājñavalkya unlike the usual *karsha* of 80 *ratis*.

3. See Allan *Catalogue of the Indian Coins in the British Museum (Ancient India)*, pp. xvii—xix : clxi—clxii. 4-10.

4. According to Walsh (*Punch-marked coins from Taxila*, pp. 3-4), these coins weighing from 2.3 to 2.86 grains were the silver *paṇas* or *māshas* of two *ratis*. This view is criticised by D. D. Kosambi who provisionally calls them one-twentieth *kārshāpaṇa* (See Kosambi, *op. cit.*, p. 19).

5. See Allan. *op. cit.*, pp. lxix and Pl. xlvi.

We have an interesting glimpse of the condition of the currency in north-western India at the time of Alexander's invasion in the casual observation of a classical writer. We are told by Quintus Curtius that among the presents offered by the king of Taxila to Alexander were included thirty talents of *signatum argentum* ('coined silver'). We may identify these coins either with the Older Class of punch-marked coins or with the class of bent bar coins above described. The reference to silver coins in this connection, as R. B. Whitehead¹ justly observes, probably signifies that silver was employed as the standard metal at that time. Of the currency conditions of the Maurya empire in Aśoka's last years, we have probably a valuable record in the shape of the Taxila hoard of punch-marked coins of the Later Class of *circa* 248 B.C. as above mentioned. These coins contain a considerable alloy of copper (75.3 p.c.) as compared with silver (40.3 p.c.) and in many cases are more than 54 grains in weight.

Turning to the subsidiary copper coinage of these times, we may mention that the class of square or rectangular cast coins bearing the characteristic symbols of 'the hill and crescent', the hollow cross and the like has been held to have been issued by the Mauryas². To the same period has probably to be assigned a class of punch-marked copper coins with Maurya obverse marks, of which a hoard was found at Bhagalpur in 1925³. With the Mauryas again we may probably connect numerous specimens of the remarkable copper coinage of Taxila which extends over several centuries and is mostly uninscribed and die-struck⁴. In a fragmentary stone-plaque inscription

1. *The Pre-Mohammedan Coinage of North-Western India*, p. 42.

2. On a hoard of such coins, excavated at Bulandibagh (near Patna) from the Mauryan level of 15 to 18 feet below ground-level and on two such pieces dug out from below the Aśokan level near the Aśokan monolith at Sārnāth, see Durga Prasad, *Num. Suppl.* xlvii, pp. 62-6. Previously, Allan (*op. cit.*, p. lxxvii) had cautiously suggested the 3rd-2nd century B. C. as the date of the cast copper coins.

3. See Allan, *op. cit.*, lxxix.

4. According to Allan (*op. cit.*, cxxxix) the copper coinage of Taxila began late in the 3rd century B.C. when Taxila was under Maurya governors and ended with the Greek conquest before the middle of the 2nd century B.C. On independent grounds Vincent Smith (*Cat. of coins in the Ind. Mus.*, p. 147) had previously held that the single die-struck pieces of Taxila began not later than 350 B. C., while the double-die coins were prior to the coins of Agathocles and Pantaleon, *c.* 190-180 B. C.

of *circa* third century B.C., which was discovered some years ago at Mahasthan in the Bogra district of Bengal¹, reference is made to 'a coin of the value of four cowries' called *gaṇḍaka*².

The downfall of the Maurya empire was not followed by the withdrawal of the imperial currency from circulation. From the finds of Indo-Greek coins in the same deposits at various sites, we may safely conclude that the punch-marked silver coins were in circulation down at least to the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.³. That their circulation was continued even down to the Kushān times is proved by a Mathurā stone-pillar inscription of the twentieth year of Huvishka mentioning an endowment of 11,000 *purāṇas*⁴.

1. See *Ep. Ind.* xxi, pp. 83-91.

2. It may be added that on a number of inscribed coins which had been read differently by previous scholars, K. P. Jayaswal (*JBORS.* xx. pp. 279-308) claimed to have read the names of the Maurya kings Bṛhaspatimitra, Śatadharman, Daśaratha, Samprati, Devadharman and Śāliśūra.

3. For references cf. the Bajaur hoard of 1942 described by H. L. Haugton in *JNSI*, iv. part i, and the hoard at Bairat described by Daya Ram Sahni in *Archaeological Remains and Excavations at Bairat* (not dated.)

4. *Ep. Ind.* xxi. pp. 60 ff.

CHAPTER IX

RELIGION

Literary Background

There are unfortunately no definitely dated literary records of the Nanda-Maurya period. The epigraphic records that only date from the time of Aśoka give a one-sided picture of the religion of the people. The Śrauta and Gṛhya Sūtras which possibly belong to this period do not give a picture of the religion in practice but attempt at a systematisation of the orthodox Brahmanical traditions both social and ritualistic. They show Brahmanism on the defensive trying to safeguard its rights and privileges against the newly started religious movements such as Buddhism and Jainism. The now famous *Arthasāstra* of Kauṭilya is of suspected authenticity and may be used only as a source of secondary importance. The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini is a compilation of this period and contains some important references to the religious institutions of the times. What is more important, it mentions the *Mahābhārata*. But it is not known which Mahābhārata it was. It was certainly not the epic in its present developed form. Supposing it was the old Pāṇḍu story, it does not throw any light on the age of the present epic. The epic therefore cannot be used as a source of information for the religious history of the Nanda-Maurya period.

The early Buddhist texts, in spite of the ecclesiastical violence of different ages, seem to have preserved some authentic traditions of the pre-Aśokan times. They contain, to a limited extent, the picture of the religion as practised in those days and also of the struggle that was going on between Buddhism and the opposing sects. But this does not mean that the entire Buddhist canon in its present form can be used as a source of information for the period in question. The Buddhist traditions would have us believe that the first two collections of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka namely the Sūtrapiṭaka with its five *nikāyas* and the Vinayapiṭaka were brought together in the council of Rājagṛha, held immediately after the death of Buddha and that the third collection, the Abhidharmapiṭaka

assumed its final form in the time of Aśoka, in the third council held at Pāṭaliputra. But this claim has been proved to be too exaggerated to be naively accepted. The Aśokan edicts show that the Buddhist canon was then in the making and not a full-fledged Tripiṭaka. In the Bhabru edict, Aśoka specially recommends to the Saṅgha a number of religious texts with the following instruction : 'I desire that many groups of monks and nuns may repeatedly listen to these expositions of the Dharma (*dhmma-paliyāyāni*) and reflect on them. In the same way both laymen and laywomen (should act)'.

The seven expositions of Dharma recommended by Aśoka were the following :

1. Vinaya-samukase (Vinaya-samutkarṣa).
2. Aliyavasāni (Āryavaṃśāni)
3. Anāgatabhayāni
4. Munigāthā
5. Moneyasute (Moneyyasūtra)
6. Upatisapasine (Upatissaprasna)
7. Lāghulovāde (Rāhulavāda)

It is generally assumed that these Sūtras were selections from the extensive Buddhist canon, which according to the tradition, had been constituted already before the time of Aśoka. Under this assumption, all the texts except the first have been identified. Accordingly Aliyavasāni has been identified with Aṅguttara II, 27, Anāgatabhayāni with Aṅguttara III, 103, Munigāthā with Munisutta of the Suttanipāta, Moneyasute with Nālaka-sutta of the same text, Upatisa-pasine with the Rathavinīta-sutta of the Majjhima (I, 146-51) and the Lāghulovāde with the Rāhulavāda-sutta of the Majjhima (I. 414).

Aśoka clearly says that these texts had been spoken by the Buddha himself (*bhagavatā buddhena bhāsīte*). They are called Dhamma-paliyāya or Dharmaparyāya which regularly means a Buddhist religious text according to the old tradition of the north. But their identification is doubtful as there is no clue in the inscription to their contents excepting in the case of Lāghulovāde. It is said that this text concerned falsehood (*musāvādam adhigīya*) and in fact the Rāhulavāda-sūtra as preserved in the Pāli Majjhimanikāya and the northern Madhyamāgama contains a warning to Rāhula against falsehood.

But in which form was the text known to Aśoka? It was certainly not known in its present amplified form. It is probable that the Aśokan text consisted of the gāthā portions which contain the essentials of the Sūtra.

Then again the language in which they were known to Aśoka was neither Sanskrit nor Pāli. The titles of texts which Aśoka mentions in his edict have marked Māgadhī characteristics (cf. *aliya* for Pāli *ariya*, *Lāghulo* for *Rāhula*, the termination *e* as in *-sute*, *samukase*, for Pāli *o*). Admitting that Aśoka was quoting the exact titles of the texts known to him, the conclusion is inevitable that the form in which he knew them was Māgadhī. This pre-Aśokan Māgadhī canon was not yet a well-constituted Tripiṭaka, as the Pāli tradition would have us believe, but a literature still in the making. It should be remembered that although there was occasion for it, Aśoka does not mention either the *piṭaka* or the *nikāya*, words which occur on the Buddhist monuments within a century from Aśoka's time. It is therefore almost clear that the literature was not yet available in the time of Aśoka in a tangible form and that the community was not yet much given to the scripture. But a lead had already been given in this direction either by Aśoka on his own initiative or by Magadhan church and the old traditions had begun to be collected. Hence arose the necessity of encouraging the monks as well as the laymen to study them. Under these circumstances it is permitted to take some of the traditions embodied in the Buddhist canon as old and genuine.

But the same thing cannot be said about the Jainā canon. The first systematic collection of the canon was made only in the 6th century A.D. apparently from old manuscripts but also from the mouths of the monks who could still recite them from memory. But the form in which the Aṅgas have come down to us is admittedly later than that of the Pāli canon which itself is post-Aśokan. Then again an important section of the Jainā community, the Digambaras, disown this canon and dispute its authenticity as true utterances of Mahāvira. Under these circumstances, although the assumption that it contains some very old traditions of the Jainā church may not be wholly unjustified, our scope of discrimination in using them is extremely limited.

The contemporary Greek records, specially the fragments of the lost account of Megasthenes, contain some valuable references to the religious life of the Maurya age and confirm to some extent the information available from the Buddhist texts.

A study of these sources shows that in the Nanda-Maurya period, Brahmanism was still mainly an aristocratic religion of which the principal supporters were the kings, the nobles, and the rich Brahmin householders. The real custodians of the religious lore were the priests who occupied the highest rank in the social hierarchy. There was also an ascetic class among the Brahmins which consisted of teachers advocating somewhat new ways of religious thoughts and practices which may be traced to Upanishadic origin. Those teachers had a more direct appeal to the common people and attracted people from other classes of society too to a life of renunciation. It was probably at the hands of this ascetic class that new theistic movements originated in the Maurya period. Closely allied to this ascetic class but with definitely distinctive features were the two religious movements, Buddhism and Jainism, which began to play a very important part in the religious life of the country from the Maurya period.

Brahmanism

The Vedic and domestic ritual certainly occupied the most important place in the Brahmanical religion of this period. The account of Megasthenes bears clear testimony to it. Megasthenes tells us (Frag. I. B : Diod. III, 63) that the philosophers, by which he means the priestly class, although inferior in number, were prominent over all the classes in point of dignity and that they were engaged by private persons to offer sacrifices. Aśoka's reference to the Deva-worshippers relates to this class of priests who were engaged in sacrifices and not to the popular religious movements which do not seem to have as yet gained any considerable importance.

The references to the Vedic lore and ritualism in the canonical Buddhist texts clearly bring out their importance in the Nanda-Maurya period. The Vedic Ṛṣis such as Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa and Bhagu were popularly claimed to

be the ancestors of the Brahmins and the seers of the Vedic mantras (*mantānām kattā*). Some of these Ṛṣis were actually composers of the hymns. Vāmadeva was the composer of the hymns of the fourth Maṇḍala of the *Ṛgveda*, Bhāradvāja of the sixth maṇḍala, and Vāseṭṭha (Vasiṣṭha) of the hymns of the seventh maṇḍala. The sage Atṭhaka (Aṣṭaka) is mentioned in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VII, 17) and the *Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra* (XV, 26) as one of the sons of Viśvāmītra. Vāmaka and Bhagu (Bhṛgu) appear as teachers and sages in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (X. 6. 5. 9 ; VII, 2, 1, 11). Yamataggi (Jamadagni) was a rival of the famous sage Vasiṣṭha. Āṅgīrasa is mentioned as a famous teacher in the *Taittirīya-saṃhitā* (III, 1. 7. 3 ; VII, 1.4.1). It is further said in the Buddhist texts that the Brahmins of the period not only claimed descent from those ancient teachers but also were capable of reciting the ancient *mantras*. They were serious students and teachers of the sacrificial literature and were proficient in the three Vedas. Those who were engaged for the performance of sacrifices were famous for their knowledge of the Vedic lore and purity of origin. Purity implied purity in descent up to the seventh generation both on the father's and the mother's side, and proficiency in the Vedic lore not only meant proficiency in the three Vedas but also in the Nighaṇḍu (etymology), the Keṭubha (ritual), Itihāsa, Veyyākaraṇa (grammar), Lokāyata etc. (*Vedānam pāragū sanighaṇḍu-keṭubhānam sākṣharappabhadānam itihāsa-pañcamānam padaḥo veyyākaraṇo lokāyata-mahāpurisalakkhaṇesu anavayo*—Majjhima II, p. 210 ; Digha I, p. 128.)

The Buddhist texts mention a class of Brahmins named Brāhmaṇa-mahāśālas who used to receive revenues of lands granted to them by the king of the country. These Brahmins were rich and capable of undertaking for themselves the most expensive sacrifices. They also used to entertain a large number of students, sometimes 300 to 500, coming to them from different parts of the country and to impart to them the knowledge of the Vedic lore. These Brahmins were the most respected and are described as not only pure in descent but also as possessing a divine colour (*brahmavaṇṇi*), a divine radiance (*brahmavac-* ; *casi*) and of agreeable speech and language (*kalyāṇavāco*,

kalyāṇavākkaraṇo). The names of some of these Brahmins are given in the Buddhist texts : Caṅki, Tārukka, Pokkharasāti, Jānussoni, Todeyya, Kuṭadanta etc.

The Buddhist literature also knows the names of the various Vedas and the number of their *sākhās*. Thus in the Pāli texts (Digha I, 237) there is mention of the Addhariya, the Tittiriya, the Chandokā and the Bāvharīja (Bahvṛca). The Sanskrit Buddhist texts know more of the Vedic lore. In the Śārdūla-karṇāvadāna (Divyāva. xxxiii) there is a detailed description of the Vedic literature. Besides, it mentions the 21 *sākhās* of the Ṛigveda, 100 of the Yajurveda and 8000 (*sic.* 1000) of the Sāmaveda. The tradition is old as it is also recorded in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali (xv, 10, 11 : *ekaśatam adhvaryusākhāḥ sahasravartmā sāmavedaḥ ekaviṃśatidhāḥ bahvṛcyam*). The principal Vedic *sākhās* are also mentioned by names in the same text.

The Pāli canon mentions some of the Vedic sacrifices by names such as : Aśvamedha, Naramedha, Sammāpāsa, Vājapeyya and Niraggalam (Samyutta, p. 299). The same are mentioned in the Sanskrit Buddhist texts as Vājapeya, Aśvamedha, Puruṣamedha, Śamyāprāsa, Nirargadam and Samāprābharam. It is not clear which sacrifices were meant by the Śamyāprāsa, Nirargadam and Samāprābharam. They were no doubt Śrauta rituals as there is question of gains by the priests from those sacrifices. No big gain could be expected from the Gṛhya rituals. As they are mentioned along with the important Soma sacrifices such as Aśvamedha, Vājapeya and Puruṣamedha, they seem to have been also Soma sacrifices which entailed large expenditure.

But this ritual had also a darker side. The huge gains offered by them must have increased the greed of at least some of the priests. The large sacrifices required the immolation of a large number of animals of the herds and the felling of big trees possessed by the villagers. These meant a further taxation of the poor people by the nobles who were the real performers of the sacrifices. It is therefore impossible not to believe in some of the charges levelled against ritualism in the Buddhist texts. The Buddhist attitude is well presented in the Brāhmaṇa-dhammikasutta (Sutta-nipāta p. 50).

‘The ancient Ṛṣis were ascetics (tapassino) and practised self-control and avoided the five pleasures of the sense. Their riches consisted not of cattle, gold or grains but of learning and purity. They lived on food left at the door by the faithful and used the bed and clothes offered to them reverentially by the rich people. They were never harmed nor dominated, protected as they were by the dharma, and their access to any house was never barred. They spent 48 years of their life as brahmacārins in quest of knowledge and good conduct. Even after their marriage they lived a life of restraint. They held austerity, rectitude, tenderness, love and forbearance in high esteem. They performed sacrifices with rice, beds, clothes, ghee or oil, which they could collect by begging and never killed cows in sacrifices.

‘They possessed a noble stature and a tender and bright mien and remained always engaged in their own pursuits. In course of time, however, they began to covet a king’s riches and splendour and objects of pleasure such as women with ornaments, chariots yoked with stately horses. With an eye to these gains they approached king Okkāku (Ikṣvāku), persuaded him to celebrate aśvamedha, puruṣamedha, śamyāprāsa and vājapeyya and received as fees from him wealth, women and chariots, horses and cows, beds and clothes. Coveting more and more they again persuaded him to celebrate sacrifices by the offering of cows, which they said, constituted also the wealth of men as are land, gold or grains, and such were equally fit objects for offering. The slaughter of cows enraged the gods Brahma, Indra and even the Asuras and Rākṣasas and multiplied the diseases which were originally three, viz. desires, hunger and decrepitude, to ninety-eight and further caused to appear discord among the people and within the household, and acts improper and impious among the various classes of men.’

In the *Majjhimanikāya* (I, pp. 342-44) there is the true picture of how sacrifices used to be performed. It is in way of explaining that kind of puggala (individual) which practises self-mortification, and for self-chastisement sacrifices animals and causes sufferings to other beings. ‘This kind of puggala’, the text says, ‘includes the king or the kṣatriya noble whose head has been anointed (muddhāvasitto) as well as the wealthy Brah-

mins (Brāhmaṇo mahāsālo). He gets a sacrificial shed (santhāgāra) built outside the town, shaves his hair and beard, puts on deer skin, lubricates his body with mustard oil and enters the sacrificial shed, accompanied by his chief queen and his Brahmin priest, rubbing his body with an antelope horn. He then prepares his own bed on the bare ground and lives on cow's milk. The queen and the priest also live on milk. A part of the milk goes to the sacrificial fire and the rest goes to the calves. He then orders : kill so many bulls for the sacrifice, kill so many he-calves, so many she-calves, so many goats, so many rams, all for the sacrifice ; fell so many trees for the yūpa, pluck so much kuśa grass for the barhis. His servants, messengers, workers, all make the preparation either with tears in their eyes or weeping for fear of punishment or chastisement.' The confirmation of this account is found in the Śrauta manuals. They clearly show that the Pāli description is a true and objective picture of the Śrauta ritual as practised in those days.

But this aspect of the Vedic religion was confined, as we have already said, to aristocratic classes, the nobles and the wealthy Brahmins. The intellectual aspect of the Vedic religion was also not without its force. The Upanishadic ideal of life still moved the hearts of many people and they lived up to it.

The life of the forest-dwelling Brahmin philosophers has been described by the contemporary Greek writers. It was, we are told, a life of great simplicity and hardship. The philosophers had their cottages in front of the city within an enclosed space. They lived in simple style, used beds of rushes and deer skins and abstained from animal food and sexual pleasures. They passed their time in listening to serious discourses and in imparting their knowledge to those who would follow them. In the story of Mandanis, as told by Megasthenes, we get the true picture of a Brahmanical sage of those times. The story runs that Alexander while in India was attracted by the reputation of a sage named Mandanis and sent a messenger inviting him and promising him great reward. But Mandanis, although threatened with death, refused to accept his invitation and sent the following reply :

'God, the supreme king, is never the author of insolent wrong, but is the creator of light, of peace, of life, of water, of

the body of man, and of souls and these he receives when death sets them free, being in no way subject to evil desire. He alone is the god of my homage, who abhors slaughters and instigates no wars. . . . Know this, however, that what Alexander offers me and the gifts he promises, are all things to me utterly useless ; but the things I prize, and of real use and worth, are these leaves which are my house, these blooming plants which supply me with dainty food, and the water which is my drink, while all other possessions and things which are amassed with anxious care, are wont to prove ruinous to those who amass them, and cause only sorrow and vexation, with which every poor mortal is fully fraught. But as for me, I lie upon the forest leaves, and having nothing which requires guarding, close my eyes in tranquil slumber ; whereas had I gold to guard, that would banish sleep . . . Should Alexander cut off my head, he cannot also destroy my soul. My head alone, now silent, will remain but the soul will go away to its Master, leaving the body like a torn garment upon the earth, whence also it was taken. I then, becoming spirit, shall ascend to my God.' (cf. *Mégastrhenes*, *Frag.* LV ; also *Frag.* xli, xlv, xlv.).

The account doubtless had a real basis as we come across such types of Brahmanical sages not infrequently in the Buddhist texts. The true Brahmins are distinguished from the false ones by Buddha and are well spoken of by him. Such Brahmins were expected to observe the five dhammas : truthfulness (*saccam*), austerity (*tapam*), continence (*brahmacariyam*), study (*ajjhenam*) and gifts (*cāgam*). These alone could conduce to the attainment of the *Brahma-sahavyatā* or the attainment of the world of Brahman (*Majjhima* ii, 199 ; *Sutta Nipāta*, p. 79).

This makes it clear that in the Nanda-Maurya period both the Vedic ritual and Upanishadic thought were active forces in the religious life of the country. There were the kings, nobles and wealthy Brahmins who believed in the efficacy of sacrifices and used to perform them with the help of hired priests. These priests who formed a class by themselves were the custodians of the Vedic lore. Many of them were attracted by the fees for officiating at the sacrifices and had become almost professional. But there were others too who saw no attractions in such

gains and lived a simple life of austerities, far away from the inhabited localities, in the forests, striving hard to realise the Brahman through tapasyā or asceticism.

The ascetic movement

The ascetics were known under the general name of Śramaṇa. Although the Buddhists alone appropriated this title to themselves in later times, the order of the Śramaṇas originated in the Brahmanical fold. It assumed a distinct shape in the Nanda-Maurya period. Already in the Upanishads there are references to the Brahmācārins and the Yatis besides the sacrificers and the hermits. For the first time in the law books there is mention of a full-fledged order called either Vaikhānasa or Vānaprastha (Gautama, III, 2 ; Āpastamba, III, 9, 21, 1 ; Vasiṣṭha, VII, 2). This is the third among the four orders (*āśrama*) in which a householder in his ripe old age is required to retire to the forest after leaving the family duties to his son. In this stage he lives like an anchorite, wears the bark of trees, eats fruits and passes his days in higher thoughts. The origin of the Śramaṇas goes back to this order of the Vaikhānasas.

The Greek writers also give the same account of the Śramaṇas whom they call either Sarmanes or Sramnai. The most respected among them were the Hylobioi (υλοβίος), 'the forest-dwellers'. It has been said about them : 'They live in woods, where they subsist on leaves of trees and wild fruits, and wear garments made from the bark of trees' (Megasthenes, Frag. XLI, 60). They observed the vow of chastity and abstained from drinking wine. They were so much esteemed that even the kings communicated with them through messengers in order to ascertain the causes of things and to get divine favour. These forest-dwellers were the same as those included in the Vaikhānasa order.

Besides the Vānaprasthas, the *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* (loc. cit.) mentions another order of ascetics called Parivrājaka. In the Buddhist texts they are depicted as wandering teachers who had specialised in ethics, philosophy, nature-lore and mysticism. Their only difference with other forest-dwellers probably consisted in their travelling from place to place and in enlightening the people on various matters concerning religion and philo-

sophy. In the early Buddhist texts there are frequent references to them and to special houses called *paribbājaka-ārāma* provided for them near the towns. The villagers and town-folk also provided them with meeting places called *kotuhalasālās* (Digha, III, pp. 36, ff., Divyāvadāna, p. 143).

The Greek writers seem to have included them within the class of Sarmanes and philosophers. Speaking of some of the philosophers in one place Megasthenes says : 'To the people of India at large they render great benefits ; when gathered together at the beginning of the year, they forewarn the assembled multitudes about droughts and wet weather, and also about propitious winds, diseases, and other topics capable of profiting the hearers' (Frag. I, 40). The physicians also belonged to the Śramaṇa class. Megasthenes tells us that they were engaged in the study of the nature of man and that they were simple in their habits. They had as their food either rice or barley meal which they would get either by begging or from those who entertained them as guests. They like other Śramaṇas practised asceticism.

The Greek accounts as well as the Buddhist texts tell us that among the Śramaṇas there were also the diviners, sorcerers, and adepts in the rites and customs relating to the dead. They lived on begging in the villages and towns. Megasthenes informs us that there were also female ascetics in some classes of the Śramaṇas. Such female ascetics are mentioned in the Buddhist texts too. They are referred to as *paribbājikā* and a special class of them as *molibaddhā paribbājikā* who used to go about in the company of male ascetics (Megasthenes Frag. XLII, 60; Majjhima, I, p. 305 ; Samyutta, III. pp. 238-240).

There is no doubt that the order of the Śramaṇas and *Pari-vrājakas* was open to the people of all castes but there is no clear evidence as to whether they used to give up their caste distinctions and obligations after joining that order. Buddha is once decried by a Brahmin not so much for becoming a Śramaṇa but for giving up his caste distinctions and thus becoming a *vṛṣala* (Vasalasutta, Sutta Nipāta, p. 21). In the Buddhist texts four kinds of Śramaṇas are spoken of according to their religious conduct. They were : *Maggajino*—those who had reached the end of the way and attained *Nirvāṇa*, *Maggadesako*—

those who show the way to the highest goal, Magge Jivati—those who live according to the way and Maggadusi—those who are vain, talkative, devoid of self-restraint and although wearing the dress of religious men destroy the good name of the line of their own teachers (Cundasutta, Sutta Nipāta, p. 16).

Closely allied to the general order of the Śramaṇas and Parivrājakas, there were some communities of religious men which claimed their origin from some well-known teachers contemporaneous with Buddha and followed some distinct religious beliefs. They were the sophists or Tīrthikas (vādasilā titthiyā), the Ājīvikas and the Nigaṇṭhas (cf. Dhammikasutta, Sutta Nipāta, v. 381). The famous Tīrthika teachers in the time of Buddha were Pūraṇa Kassapa, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Ajita Keśa-Kambala, Saṅjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, Makkhali Gosāla and Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta. Of the religious orders founded by them only those of the last two teachers had lived up to the Nanda-Maurya period ; the followers of the first four teachers had probably merged into the general Śramaṇa order for want of strong leaders. The religious order of Makkhali Gosāla was the Ājīvika and that of Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, the Nigaṇṭha (Nirgrantha).

The Ājīvika and Nirgrantha movements

Although the origin of these two religious movements goes back to the times of Buddha, nothing precisely is known about their progress before the Maurya period. The word Makkhali which is used as a part of the name of Gosāla, the founder of the Ājīvika order, was probably the name of the order. It corresponds to the Sanskrit word Maskarin. Pāṇini in one of his Sūtras (VI, 1, 154) refers to the Maskarin as a class of parivrājakas who carried a bamboo-staff (maskara) in their hands. They were also styled for this reason Ekadaṇḍin. While commenting on the Sūtra, Patañjali in his *Mahābhāṣya*, refers to their fatalistic belief. The Buddhist and Jain texts too ascribe to them a fatalistic creed and say that they held that there is no cause either ultimate or remote, no reward or retribution, no such thing as power or energy and that all 'are bent this way or that by their fate, by the necessary conditions of the class to which they belong, by their individual nature' (Sāmaññaphala-

sutta, Dialogues of Buddha II, p. 71 where all the references to the principal Buddhist and Jaina texts have been collected).

The Ājīvikas appear to have attained some importance in the time of Aśoka as the latter mentions them side by side with the Buddhists and Nirgranthas and says that his Mahāmātras had been asked to look after their welfare and progress as well (Pillar edict VII). In the 12th year of his reign, Aśoka made gifts of two caves in the Barābar hills to the Ājīvikas. The order seems to have maintained its importance throughout the Maurya period as one of the grandsons of Aśoka, Daśaratha, is also known to have dedicated some caves in the Nāgārjuni hills to the Ājīvika order.

The Ājīvikas, as we have already seen, belonged to the Śramaṇa class. Their order had assumed a distinct shape in later times but they must have inherited many of the Śramaṇa traditions. As such they had among them both Brahmin and non-Brahmin recluses but there is no evidence of their having two different orders, Brahminical and non-Brahminical.

The Nirgrantha was also a Śramaṇa order closely connected with the Ājīvika. The later Jainism which claims descent from this ancient order has foisted many traditions on it but in spite of them, the ancient Nirgrantha order does not seem to have been a religious movement of any considerable importance in the Nanda-Maurya period. We learn from the Buddhist texts that the founder of the Nirgrantha order was Mahāvira otherwise known as Nātaputta (Jñātṛkaputra) who was called a Nirgrantha because he belonged to that order of Śramaṇas. The name of the order meant 'those who have destroyed the worldly ties' and also 'those who have given up their clothes.' In the first sense they were pravrajita or the houseless ascetics and in the second sense, the naked ascetics. They were thus the same as the *acelakas* who are often mentioned in the Buddhist texts. In fact a slightly doubtful fragment of the account of Megasthenes, speaks of a sect of philosophers who used to go naked throughout their life and to say that the body had been given by God as a covering of the soul. They abstained from animal food and all food cooked by fire, being content to live on fruits picked up when they had dropped to the ground (Fragm. LIV). These few points of their doctrines have a good deal of

similarity with the doctrines ascribed to the Nigaṅṭhas in the Buddhist texts. They believed in the existence of soul and desisted from killing animals and destroying even plants which according to them were endowed with life. They were besides naked ascetics. We may therefore consider the naked ascetics referred to in the account of Megasthenes as identical with the Nirgranthas. Megasthenes, however, calls them Brahmin and not Śramaṇa. This might have been due to their standing near to the Brahmin philosophers in point of purity of conduct and religious beliefs and distinguishing themselves from the peripatetic monks who were also recruited from the lower classes.

Except in the Buddhist texts there are not many references to the Nirgranthas in the contemporary literature. In the seventh pillar edict, Aśoka mentions them along with the Ājīvikas and the Buddhists to state that his Mahāmātras were also occupied with their welfare.

The tradition as embodied in the late Jain books, has, however, a more connected history of the church to present. The Nirgrantha community was confined in the 4th century B. C. to Magadha and the heads of the church were in chronological order Sayambhava, Yaśobhadra, Sambhūtivijaya and Bhadrabāhu. Bhadrabāhu was a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya and had converted the latter to the Nirgrantha religion. While Bhadrabāhu was the head of the church, a terrible famine broke out in Magadha and it became difficult for the monks to get alms. Bhadrabāhu then decided to leave the country with a part of the community. Accordingly Sthūlabhadra who was the son of Śakaḍāla, the minister of the Nanda king, was appointed head of the Magadhan community. Bhadrabāhu took a part of the community with him to the South where they settled down at Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa in Mysore. It is further said that Chandragupta also abdicated the throne at this time and followed his teacher to Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa where he died of voluntary starvation, as prescribed by the Nirgrantha religion. Sthūlabhadra for fear that the ancient traditions might be lost convoked a council of the monks at Pāṭaliputra in which the sacred literature consisting of the 11 Aṅgas and 14 Pūrvas was recited and fixed. Bhadrabāhu returned to Magadha after twelve years, when the famine had passed away, with a section

of his followers. He found that the sacred texts collected in the Council of Pāṭaliputra did not contain the authentic traditions of the church and so he turned them down as spurious. The Magadhan monks had in the meantime begun to put on clothes and this practice was also declared by him as contrary to the original teachings of Mahāvīra. This denunciation however did not lead to an immediate schism in the church. The successor of Sthūlabhadra in the Magadhan church was Mahāgiri. He remained in power till the end of the Maurya period. It was in his time that Samprati, the grandson and successor of Aśoka, became a convert to the Nirgrantha faith and tried to imitate his grandfather in the matter of the propagation of the faith which he professed.

The *Kalpasūtra* (translation, S.B.E. XXII, pp. 288 ff.) gives a list of the Gaṇas and Śākhās that originated in the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C. within the Nirgrantha community. According to it, one of the disciples of Bhadrabāhu, named Godāsa founded the Godāsa-gaṇa which divided itself into four Śākhās namely : Tāmraliptika, Koṭivarṣīya, Puṇḍravardhaniya and Dāsīkharbaṭika. The first three are well known names of places in Bengal. The tradition would thus have us believe that the Nirgrantha religion, in the beginning of the 3rd century B.C., had spread to Bengal to such an extent as to lead to the formation of local subsects. The *Kalpasūtra* further says that Mahāgiri had eight disciples, two of whom, Uttara and Balissaha, founded a Gaṇa named Uttarabalissaha. This Gaṇa also divided itself into four Śākhās namely : Kauśāmbikā, Sautaptikā, Kauṭumbinī and Candanāgarī.

Another tradition recorded in the *Niryukti* of the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra* speaks of a certain number of schisms in the Church. The leaders of the schismatic monks are said to have maintained philosophical views different from those taught by Mahāvīra. Three such schisms occurred in the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C. The first of these was led by one Āśādhasena who, we are told, carried the doctrine of *syādvāda* to an impossible extreme and also maintained that there was no difference between accomplished ascetics and gods. The second was led by Aśvamitra who refused to admit the doctrine of *kṣaṇika*, and the third by Gaṅga who admitted the perception of two sensations simultaneously.

Confirmation of these traditions is however lacking. Two inscriptions of Śravaṇa Belgoḷa, of course, refer to Bhadrabāhu and Chandragupta but they belong only to the 10th century A. D. Aśoka does not take any special interest in the religion of his grandfather except ordering his officials to look after them as after the Ājīvikas and other religious communities. It should also be remembered that although Aśoka and his grandson make gifts of cave dwellings to the Ājīvikas they do not do anything of the kind to the Nirgranthas. As to the spread of the Nirgrantha religion to Bengal, the *Divyāvadāna* speaks of their presence in Puṇḍravardhana (North Bengal) in the time of Aśoka but only as parivrājakas and not as members of an organised church. As to the schisms, it may be noted that the established Jaina philosophy does not bear the stamp of the new philosophical doctrines which their leaders are said to have introduced. Besides the doctrine of *kṣāṇika*, which Aśvāmītra is said to have opposed, was not a Jaina doctrine but belonged to Buddhism. Under these circumstances it is impossible to accept the traditional story as historical.

It therefore appears that the two religious orders, the Ājīvika and Nirgrantha, were still small local communities of Magadha, not powerful enough to demand that protection from the state which Buddhism enjoyed. The Nirgrantha order was even less important than the Ājīvika but it managed to survive the latter up to later times and to rise into greater importance.

Buddhism

Although originally a Śramaṇa movement, Buddhism had emerged out of it in the 4th century B.C. as a distinct and powerful religion endowed with great potentiality for expansion. But the extent of this expansion before the time of the Emperor Aśoka is still a matter of conjecture. Its activity in pre-Aśokan times seems to have been confined to Kosala and Magadha but small communities of brethren had probably come into existence in the west in Mathurā and Ujjayinī. The traditional account of the second Buddhist council which is said to have taken place 100 years after the Nirvāṇa of Buddha at Vaiśālī, refers to invitations sent to the *pāṭhēyya* monks and to the

communities in such distant places as Avanti, Kauśāmbī, Sāṅkāśya and Kanauj. Pātheyya meant the western monks including probably the community of Mathurā. The Aśokan legends attach great importance to the monastery of Naṭabhaṭa on the Urumuṇḍa hill at Mathurā, as Upagupta, the spiritual guide of the Emperor, and Śāṅavāsa, the teacher of Upagupta, both belonged to that institution. The legends at least show that Mathurā had attained some importance in the Buddhist church already before the time of Aśoka.

The most outstanding events in the history of the church in this period were the two councils, the second and the third. The second council was held, according to all traditions, one hundred years after the Nirvāṇa, at Vaiśālī. It is said to have originated on account of some difference in points of monastic discipline. The monks of Vaiśālī had declared as admissible ten new points viz. : 1. storing of salt in a horn, 2. the taking of the midday meal when the sun's shadow shows two finger-breadths after noon, 3. the going to some village and there eating fresh food, 4. residing in the same parish and yet holding the uposatha separately, 5. sanction of a solemn act in an incomplete chapter, 6. (unconditional) following of a precedent, 7. the partaking of unchurned milk, 8. the use of unfermented toddy, 9. the use of a mat without fringes (not conforming with the model prescribed), 10. to accept gold and silver.

This action was not however approved by other monks and hence a council was called at Vaiśālī. This council after a long deliberation appointed a committee of eight elders, four of them hailed from the east and the other four from the west. Among the former was Sabbakāmi, thera of Vaiśālī who, it is said, had received his ordination 120 years earlier and among the latter was Sambhūta Śāṅavāsa of Mathurā who was probably the same as the teacher of Upagupta. The ten points of the monks of Vaiśālī were declared to be against the rules. In a plenary session of the council, the Vinaya was rehearsed. The Bhikkhus who were excommunicated are also said to have convened another meeting which was a great council (Mahāsaṅgīti). Henceforth the followers of the wrong views who were then most probably more numerous came to be known as the Mahāsāṅghika.

. So far, the story seems to be generally reliable but the difficulty arises when the question of chronology comes in. The tradition says that the council was held in the time of Aśoka, or Kālāśoka, the son of Śiśunāga. But history does not know of any such king. Attempts have been made to identify Kālāśoka with Kākavarṇa who is mentioned in the Puranic lists as the son of Śiśunāga but the identification is based on unconvincing grounds. The Pāli as well as Sanskrit Buddhist sources say that Aśoka flourished one hundred years after the Nirvāṇa and that until he embraced the Buddhist faith he was living a life of black and sinful deeds. He was then a Caṇḍāśoka or a Kāmāśoka but after his conversion he became a Dharmāśoka. It is this Aśoka then who is contemplated in the traditional account of the second council. Some of the monks who took a leading part in the conference seem to have been contemporaneous with the Maurya emperor whereas others belonged to one generation earlier.

Although the story of the second council in its present form is a garbled version and does not give a faithful picture of the event, it, however, seems that it had a historical basis. A Vinaya council had certainly been held at Vaiśālī and its session might have been necessitated by the arbitrary conduct of the local monks, but the time when it was held cannot be fixed with any amount of certainty. It is not impossible that it was held during the earlier part of the reign of Aśoka. This council led to the first schism in the church and the foundation of the Mahāsāṅghika school.

The account of the third council which was held at Pāṭalīputra is still more confused. It was not a general council but a party meeting of the Elders—the Theravādins. The Ceylonese tradition says that it was held 18 years after the coronation of Aśoka but there is no confirmation of this fact in the edicts of the emperor. As it was a meeting of the Theravādins, the Mahāsāṅghikas were excluded from it. The Ceylonese account of the council runs as follows :

‘When 236 years had elapsed after Nirvāṇa, sixty thousand monks dwelt in the Aśokārāma. Sectarious of different descriptions, all of them wearing the kaṣāya, ruined the Doctrine of the Jina. It was then that Tissa Moggaliputta convoked a

council, attended by 1000 monks. Having destroyed the false doctrines and subdued many shameless people, he restored the true faith, and propounded the Abhidhamma treatise *Kathāvattu*. It was from him that Mahendra, the future apostle of Buddha, learnt the 5 nikāyas, the 7 books of the Abhidhamma and the whole Vinaya.'

The account, as may be seen, has a pronounced sectarian tendency and tries to prove the originality and superiority of the Theravāda or the Vibhajjavāda school. This clearly shows that it was a party meeting of which the historicity may not be disputed, but the story of the compilation of the *Kathāvattu*, which again presupposes the existence of the entire Pāli canon consisting of the Vinaya, the 5 nikāyas and six other Abhidhamma works must be made an exception.

The history of the Buddhist church in this period was not in all appearance an undisturbed one. The church was gradually losing its unity on account of its expansion and for want of regular communication between the various distant communities. Local influences were slowly affecting their conduct and shaping them in different ways. These tendencies ultimately gave rise to different Buddhist schools. The community of Vaiśālī, as we have already seen, formed itself into a school either before the time of Aśoka or in a period when Aśoka had not yet taken up the cause of Buddhism. Under Aśoka's patronage, the Buddhist community of Pāṭaliputra, which pretended to be more loyal to the teachings of Buddha, reorganised itself and tried to check the schismatic tendency in the church. It is probably under their influence that Aśoka advised his officials to see that nobody might destroy the unity of the Saṅgha. The Sārnāth Pillar edict contains the following order of the emperor to his officers at Pāṭaliputra :

'...the Saṅgha cannot be divided by any one. But indeed the monk or nun who shall break up the Saṅgha should be caused to put on white robes and to reside in non-residence.'

The same instruction was also issued by the emperor to the Mahāmātras of Kauśāmbī. In the Sāñchī version of the edict, the instruction is given in a slightly different form : 'The Saṅgha of both monks and nuns is made united as long as (my) sons

and great-grandsons (shall reign) and as long as the moon and the sun (shall shine).’

The compelling of a monk or a nun to put on white robes and to reside in non-residence meant expulsion from the community, a punishment prescribed in the Vinayas for the offence of Saṅghabheda. Aśoka certainly did not issue the edict to give publicity to the already-existing Vinaya rule concerning Saṅghabheda. The church must have shown serious symptoms of disintegration and this was a special measure to safeguard its unity. The tradition confirms that Aśoka’s fears were justified. It is said that during the third century of the Nirvāṇa, a number of schools such as Sarvāstivāda, Mahiśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka etc. made their appearance within the orthodox section of the church (Theravāda). The Mahāsāṅghika school which had long separated from it was also split up into a number of schools.

The greatest event in the history of Buddhism in this period was the conversion of Aśoka. The legendary accounts, although marred by many exaggerated claims of the community, enable us to give a connected picture of Aśoka as a Buddhist. The traditions are confirmed by the inscriptions and both have been reviewed in the account of the reign of Aśoka given above.

Aśoka’s patronage must have contributed to the spread of Buddhism not only within the empire but also to distant lands even in his lifetime. We learn from the edicts that he himself had given a lead in this direction. Throughout his empire he had circulated instructions on the Dhamma, and caused them to be inscribed on rocks and pillars overlooking the highroads so that they could attract the notice of his subjects. We have seen that he had specially advised his officials to afford facilities to his subjects and to encourage them so that they might follow the Dhamma. When he says that he had achieved the conquest by law (dhamma-vijaya) both within his empire and outside, he probably means that he had entrusted his officers with this mission within his own empire and deputed missionaries to the foreign countries.

The credit of the initiative in this direction is attributed by the Ceyloness chronicles to Tissa Moggaliputta. In the inscrip-

tions Aśoka speaks of the missions as his own. To whomsoever the initiative might have been due, either to Tissa Moggaliputta, as the tradition claims, or to Aśoka himself under the inspiration of the Saṅgha, it is quite conceivable that after the reorganisation of the Magadhan church in the third council and with the co-operation of the emperor himself, efforts were made to carry Buddhism to distant countries. The success of the first missionary activity might not have been very large so far as the foreign countries were concerned but within the Maurya empire they must have been crowned with immense success. The epigraphic records and Buddhist monuments of the post-Aśokan times bear clear testimony to it.

Theistic Movements

The rise of some of the new theistic movements which later on became the religion of the people may be placed in this period. The absence of any noteworthy references to such movements in the early Buddhist texts probably shows that they were far from being established religions in this age. The Brahmanism represented in the texts was a Vedic cult. Hence it seems probable that the theistic movements were started only when Buddhism had become an established religion of the country. Buddhism was on the way to becoming a religion of Bhakti. Buddha had been made the object of profound devotion and his relics and symbols had begun to be worshipped. In this form the Buddhist faith had a direct appeal to the common people who had so long been only the uninterested spectators of the occasional sacrifices performed by the nobles and the unwilling workers for them.

The first trace of the existence of such a movement is found in the grammar of Pāṇini. In his Sūtra iv. 3. 98 Pāṇini states that 'The affix *vun* is affixed to the name of Vāsudeva and Arjuna in the sense of the worshipful one' (*Vāsudevārjunābhyām vun*). Thus the derivative forms, Vāsudevaka and Ārjunaka mean respectively: 'the devotee of Vāsudeva' and 'the devotee of Arjuna'. While commenting on this aphorism Patañjali points out that in this case the names are probably not to be taken as the names of the Kshatriya heroes but as the designation of the *tatrabhavat*—'the adorable one.'

It is therefore almost certain that the cult of Vāsudeva and Arjuna were current at least in the Punjab in the age of Pāṇini. It is now recognised that Pāṇini was acquainted with the Mahābhārata story, as he refers not only to the heroes depicted in the story but also to the epic itself. This epic was the Pāṇḍu story. The two heroes, Vāsudeva and Arjuna, must have been deified in it.

Vāsudeva or Kṛishṇa is mentioned by the Greek writers under the name Heracles. Megasthenes (Frag. XLI) tells us : 'Heracles was worshipped by the inhabitants of the plains, especially by the Sourasenai, an Indian tribe possessed of two cities, Methora (Mathurā) and Kleisobora (Krishṇapura ?) and who had a large navigable river, the Jobares (Jumna) flowing through their territories.' Curtius informs us that 'an image of Heracles was carried in front of the enemy of Porus as he advanced against Alexander.'

The epigraphic records of the second century B.C. amply confirm that the cult of Vāsudeva was being widely followed not only by the people of the country but also by some foreign settlers. The famous Besnagar inscription records that Heliodorus, the ambassador of a Greek king named Antialcidas, was raising a Garuḍa pillar at Vidiśā in honour of Vāsudeva, 'the god of gods'. Almost in the same period and in the same place, another devotee of Vāsudeva named Gautamīputra erected a Garuḍa column in front of the temple of the Bhagvat. The Ghasundi inscription speaks of a *pūjā* stone wall for the worship of Bhagavat Saṁkarṣana and Vāsudeva. Saṁkarṣana and Vāsudeva are also mentioned in the Nānāghāt cave inscription among the objects of adoration.

It is therefore permissible to think that the cult of Vāsudeva must have originated at least a century earlier in order to enable its followers to carry the faith to distant parts of the country. Vāsudeva was no longer a hero-god like Arjuna, as he seems to have been in the time of Pāṇini, but the greatest god, the god of gods, as Heliodorus would have us believe. This evolution in the conception of the god must have taken a fairly long time.

As to the cult of Saṁkarṣana, it is difficult to say whether it had originated in the earlier period along with the cult of Vāsudeva. Saṁkarṣana was the elder brother of Vāsudeva and a

member of the Vṛshṇi race. But he does not play the same important role in the Great Epic as his younger brother. He appears as a hero, endowed with great power which he seldom exercises, his sole concern being wine. In the *Arthaśāstra* there is mention of the votaries of Saṁkarṣaṇa. It is said : 'Spies disguised as ascetics with shaved head or braided hair and pretending to be worshippers of god Saṁkarṣaṇa, may mix their sacrificial beverage with the juice of *madana* plant (and give to the cowherds) and carry off the cattle' (translation, p. 485). This might arouse a suspicion that the cult of Saṁkarṣaṇa was in vogue among the cowherds or the Ābhīras but the inscriptions of the second century B.C. already referred to do not allow any such suspicion as Saṁkarṣaṇa is ranked there with Vāsudeva and is an object of adoration even with the higher classes.

The contemporary Greek writers speak of a god named Dionysus along with Heracles. Megasthenes tells us that the Oxydrakai claimed descent from Dionysus, 'because the vine grew in their country, and their processions were conducted with great pomp, and their kings on going forth to war and on other occasions marched in Bacchic fashion with drums beating' (Frag, XLVI). Megasthenes also informs us that the worshippers of Dionysus lived on mountains and observed certain customs which were Bacchanalian. They dressed in muslin, wore turbans, used perfumes and arrayed themselves in garments dyed of bright colours (Frag. XLI). The cult of Dionysus with its Bacchanalian features reminds us of the cult of Saṁkarṣaṇa.

Aśoka refers to *pāshamḍas* in the sense of religious sects. They include the Brāhmaṇas, Śramaṇas as well as other sects but it is not clear if they included the followers of these new cults as well. In the ninth pillar edict, Aśoka speaks of the various *māṅgalas* or auspicious rites performed by the people in sickness, marriage, birth of offspring and at the time of undertaking a journey. These *māṅgalas* were evidently domestic rites and no religious cults are meant by them. Aśoka, we have seen, had introduced certain edifying shows for the instruction of the people in the Buddhist law. It is probable that similar other shows for the edification of the non-Buddhist popular cults were also known in the country. We have already discussed the

reference made by Curtius to the image of Heracles being carried in the front of the army of Porus. A curious passage of the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali mentions the images of gods (*arccā*) set up by the Mauryas to obtain gold. All this shows that images of gods and their cults were known in the country in the Maurya period but on a very limited scale and among the common people. They were still looked down on by the aristocratic followers of the Vedic cult.

CHAPTER XI

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

LANGUAGE

By 600 B.C., a little before Buddha, the Aryan speech would appear to have spread from Gandhāra to Videha and Campā in Eastern India, and to have been the common language of Indian Aryandom of the times that embraced the Mahājana-padas. The hill and forest tracts of Central India just to the south of the tracts watered by the Ganges were unquestionably Austric and Dravidian in speech ; also Bengal and Assam and Orissa ; and within the Aryandom of the upper Gangetic area and the Punjab, particularly within the former, there were still large areas, or small pockets, of non-aryan speech which were fast becoming smaller and smaller. In the Jātakas for instance, we read of Caṇḍāla villages where they spoke the the Caṇḍāla speech, and we are told of an incident in which a Caṇḍāla masquerading as a Brahmin was discovered when he unconsciously cried out *giligili* in the Caṇḍāla language when he put some very hot rice-milk within his mouth in a Brahman feast which he had joined.

For the linguistic situation in India during the Nanda and Mauryan periods, we have literary evidence only for the Nanda period, and both literary and epigraphical for the Mauryan period. The Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upanishads, the dates of which cannot be satisfactorily determined, cover at least 600 years, from 800 B.C. to 200 B.C. ; and the Buddhist and Jaina canonical literatures also, in their substance, refer to the period immediately before the Nandas ; and conditions during the Nanda age not being very different from those obtaining a few centuries earlier, the evidence from the Brāhmaṇas and other works mentioned above can be regarded as equally applicable to it. The Brahmanical Sūtras, Yāska, Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, Patañjali, Kauṭilya, Vātsyāyana, probably Bharata, and above all, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*—all these belong either wholly or partly (as in the case of the two epics) to the Nanda and Mauryan periods. On the epigraphic side, we have

to take note of the earliest Brāhmī inscriptions which are few and very small, and Brāhmī legends on the early coins and seals, some of which may be pre-Maurya ; and the inscriptions of Aśoka and his successors. Post-Maurya inscriptions for a couple of centuries after the extinction of the Maurya dynasty also have some value for these periods.

The Aryan speech during the Nanda and Maurya periods would appear to have been current, in its various local or dialectal forms, as the language of the land, from the Punjab to the eastern boundary of Bihar, which thus became the true home of the Aryan speech in India, the land of the great Aryan states : and from this area, where Brahmanism was developing as the result of a synthesis of the worlds of the Aryan and the non-Aryan, the Aryan speech was spreading south, mainly along the west, through Rajputana and Malwa and Sindh ; and it had already been established in Gujarat ; and colonies of Aryan speakers would seem to have been formed in what is now northern Mahārāshtra, as far down as the Godāvarī. The belt of forest land in the east, corresponding to present day Eastern Madhya Pradesh and Chota Nagpur, harboured rather backward groups of Non-Aryan tribes, the ancestors of the present day Kol (Munda) peoples and of Dravidian tribes like the Gonds, the Oraons and the Maler, and effectively checked, though only for a time, the penetration of the Aryan language into these tracts. Although the conquest of Kalinga (corresponding to Orissa of the present day) by Aśoka in the third century B.C. opened up this area to the Aryan language, it was some time before the latter could establish itself in Eastern India—in Bengal proper, and then (by a double current from Bengal and from Kosala or Eastern U. P. through Mahākosala or Eastern Madhya Pradesh) into Orissa. The main line of North Indian Aryan linguistic expansion into South India thus from the second half of the first millennium B.C. has always been along the west—from the Midland through Rajputana and Malwa ; and subsequently North Indian Muslim expansion into the Deccan carrying with it the Hindi speech followed the same route, in both pre-Mogul and Mogul times.

From the Brāhmaṇas we find that probably a century or two before Buddha, North Indian Aryandom included the

following ten states—Gandhāra, Kekaya, Madra, Uśinara, Matsya, Kuru, Pañcāla, Kāśi, Kosala and Videha. These included practically the entire Aryan-speaking world of say 700 B.C., and these states fell under three groups—*Udīcyā* or Northern (including Gandhāra or the northern part of the present N. W. Frontier province and probably also the continuous parts of Eastern Afghanistan, Kekaya or North-Western Punjab east of the Gandhāra country including part of the Sind Sagar Doab, and the Jeep and Rechna Doabs and Madra in two groups—the Uttara or Northern Madras probably in Kashmir and the Dakshiṇa or Southern Madras in North Central Punjab consisting of part of the Rechna and Bari Doabs), *Madhyadeśīya* or the Midland (comprising Uśinara in the west and north, corresponding to N. E. Punjab and N. W. Uttar Pradesh, Matsya or N. E. Rajputana, and Kuru and Pañcāla or Western U. P.) and *Prācyā* or the Eastern (Kosala or Oudh, Kāśi or Eastern U. P., and Videha or Northern Bihar). Other States within this Aryan tract also came to be established quickly enough, Śālva, connected with Matsya, and Magadha and Anga in Bihar to the South of the Ganges. It would appear that the division of Aryan India into these three tracts, *Udīcyā*, *Madhyadeśa* and *Prācyā*, had some basis in dialectal differences. They correspond roughly to the three-fold division of the Indus valley and the upper Gangetic valley which is still prevalent—*Punjab*, *Pachāhā*, and *Pūrab*, corresponding roughly to the Hindki or Lahnda or Western Punjabi. and Eastern Punjabi tracts, to the Western Hindi area, and to the tract of the country in the east where Kosali or Eastern Hindi and the Bihari speeches are spoken. Northern, or North-Western, Midland or Central, and Eastern—these formed the three dialect areas of the Aryan tract by 500 B. C., and to these three we shall have probably to add a fourth—the *Dākshīṇātyā* or Southern, which at this ancient period was probably not much different from the dialect area of the Midland from where the Aryan language was spreading through Rajputana and Malwa into Gujarāt and the trans-Vindhyan tracts.

About the speech of the Udīcyā tract, the popular opinion in the Midland in the age of Brāhmaṇas has been thus expressed in the *Kaushītakī Brāhmaṇa* (vii 6) : *tasmād udīcyām prajñā-*

tatarā vag udyate : udañcau eva yanti vācam śikshitam ; yo vā tata āgacchati, tasya vā śuśrūshante 'therefore speech is uttered in the North with mere discernment ; they go to the northern lands to learn speech ; and people like to listen to him who comes from there.' Thus the people of the other tracts acknowledged the Aryan language as spoken in the north-west as being the best and purest form of it. About Prācyā or the east some stray and rather obscure references in the Brāhmaṇas would suggest that the Aryan speech was becoming altered or debased there : it was the land inhabited by the Vrātyas, who did not follow the Vedic religion—they were *adīkshitas* or uninitiated people, but spoke the language of those who were *dīkshitas* or followers of Vedic rites and customs, and at the same time declared words or sentences not articulated with difficulty as being articulated with difficulty (*a-durukta-vākyam duruktam āhuḥ, a-dīkshitā dīkshita-vācam vadanti*). This statement about the speech of the Vrātyas of the East would appear to suggest the presence already of Middle Indo-Aryan or Prākṛitic habits of speech, which found the characteristic consonant combinations of the old Aryan speech difficult, and brought in consonant assimilation and cerebralisation on a large scale. In the Brāhmaṇas there is no hint about a Dākṣiṇātya or southern land as being largely inhabited by Aryan speakers, and nothing about any dialectal or linguistic speciality there.

The assumption is quite allowable that by the time of the Buddha, the spoken Aryan language had deviated considerably from the Old Indo-Aryan norm as presented by the speech of the Rīgveda, and had developed at least three distinct dialects—a Northern or North-Western, a Central, and an Eastern. This last was already fairly in the Middle Indo-Aryan or Prākṛit stage ; but the North-Western was conservative, and was regarded as the purest form of the Aryan speech, the well of Aryan undefiled—and it was exceedingly likely that in the Udīcyā as the *nidus* of the Aryan people in India there was the largest settled Aryan population, and consequently the language was better preserved ; the more Aryan speakers were penetrating further into the East, among masses of non-Aryans, the more they were getting to be smaller in numbers compared with the surround-

ing non-Aryans, and the Aryan language, in a non-Aryan environment that was growing stronger and stronger, was susceptible to a more rapid change and to change along new lines than in the North-west.

Epigraphical records of the 4th-3rd centuries B.C. bear out the occurrence of the situation as deduced from literary references—only some new developments had in the meanwhile taken place. The oldest Brāhmī inscriptions including of course those of Aśoka give us a sufficiently clear idea as to the linguistic conditions for Aryan India ; Aśoka's inscriptions, giving the same texts in as many as three distinct local dialects have been aptly described as the first 'Linguistic Survey of India'. In the Aśokan documents, we have : (i) a Prākṛit or Aryan speech of the North-West, as in the edicts at Mansehra and Shahbazgarhi. This is based on the Udīcyā dialect of the earlier period, and its phonetics even in the 3rd century B.C. shows that it had deviated the least from the Old Indo-Aryan norm, and it thus bears out the encomium of the earlier author of the Brāhmaṇas that speech here was *prajñāta-tarā*, more discerning. Northern and North-Western Punjab thus showed a great deal of conservatism in its language, even as late as the 3rd century B.C. We may even say that it was still in the Old Aryan stage (at least in its phonetics, retaining as it did a good many conjunct consonants, and the three sibilants ś, ṣ, s), while the speech of the East had deviated most. (ii) There is a Prākṛit of the East, found in Eastern inscriptions of Aśoka and elsewhere. This form of Indo-Aryan speech has deviated exceedingly from Old Indo-Aryan norm, and besides it shows phonetic peculiarities (e.g. use of only *l* and no *r*) and some forms (e.g. *-e* from *-aḥ* rather than *-o* in the case of masculine nouns ending in *-a*) which are not found in the other dialectal areas. It is exceedingly likely that this Prākṛit of the East was the language of Aśoka's court at Pāṭaliputra, and the edicts of Aśoka were first written at Pāṭaliputra in this dialect, and sent to the provinces for publication by being engraved on stone at prominent places. Where the local dialect differed so appreciably from this court speech as to make the latter not easy to follow locally, as for example in the North-West (Mansehra and

Shahbazarhi) and in the South-West (Girnār), the edicts were rendered in the local dialect ; but this rendering was not very careful, but rather haphazard as a good many forms and expressions from the court dialect were allowed to find a place in the versions in the North-western and South-western dialects. Where the local dialect did not differ so much as to make the Prācyā court dialect unintelligible, it would appear that the latter was employed, as much as in the home districts in Eastern India. Thus in Rājputana, in Western U. P., in North-western U. P. (Kalsi), and in Central U. P. (Allahabad), the Eastern dialect is employed as much as in Eastern U. P., Benares (Sarnath) and Bihar (Lauriya, Rummindei, Barabar caves). A few special characteristics may occasionally be noted, e.g., at Kalsi ; the exact reason for this is not known. It would appear that the use of Eastern Prākṛit, the Court dialect of Bihar and Benares, was like that of the use of Hindi (a form of Western Hindi of Western U. P.) in Eastern U. P. and Bihar. Generally it has been the language of the Midland that has prevailed in the East, but in the Aśoka inscriptions, owing to the political importance of Magadha as the home province of the empire, for the first and last time we have an Eastern speech established as the official language in the Midland.

In tracts far away from Arya-land, where Dravidian and also probably Kol (Munda) languages were spoken, the edicts were published in this Eastern official speech, e.g. at Dhauli and Jaugaḍa in the Kalinga country, which was both Dravidian (old Tēlugu, old Kannada) and Kol in speech, and at Siddhapur, Maski and Yerraguḍi where the language was equally Dravidian (Old Kannada).

This Eastern speech was unquestionably the same for the upper classes in Kosala, Kāśī, Videha and Magadha ; it was the language of the Buddha, who called himself a Kshatriya of Kosala (Kosala Khaṭṭiya), and of Mahāvīra also ; it was the language of Aśoka and also of Chandragupta and the Nandas. The oldest Buddhist canon, as Sylvain Lévi and Heinrich Lüders amply demonstrated, was composed in this Eastern Prākṛit, and not in Pāli. The Pāli canon appears not yet to have been known—at least, sufficiently known, in Magadha. Aśoka, when

he quoted from the Buddhist texts, quotes from a version in this Eastern dialect, and not from the Pāli.

Epigraphical evidence from the 4th century B.C. shows that in Magadha had appeared a local form of this Eastern Prākṛit which deviated in two of its sounds from what may be called the standard Prācyā or Eastern Prākṛit ; it had palatal *ś* for the dental *s* of the latter (<*ś*, *sh*, *s* of old Indo-Aryan), and probably it had developed a palatalised *ky* from *k* after a palatal vowel. This specialised Magadhan form of Prācyā was in all likelihood current among the masses of the people, of less exalted ranks, and the *ś* pronunciation was evidently looked upon as something vulgar and uneducated, judging from the fact than in later times in the Sanskrit drama the *ś* dialect was relegated to the least exalted characters.

(iii) The third dialect of Aśoka is that of the South-west as in Surāshṭra or peninsular Gujarat (Girnār). This is well-established there, and if the Gujarat speech of the 3rd century B.C. is derived from that of the Midland, then in Aśoka's Girnār edict we can see a form of the Midland speech, slightly modified perhaps from the genuine Midland dialect of the Mathurā area, given a recognition far away from its own home district—for, as we have just seen, in the Midland proper the Eastern official language was used in inscriptions.

This roughly is the situation for the spoken dialects of Aryan India during the Nanda and Maurya periods. Aśoka employed them in his inscriptions as already the Eastern speech appears to have attained a certain literary position through the Buddhist and Jaina canons being redacted in it ; and the use of the North-Western and South-Western speeches was just a concession to two distant and important dialects the speakers of which would find difficulty in following the Pāṭaliputra court speech. We know that the Greeks when they first came to India were confined to the area of the Udīcyā or North-Western dialect, a dialect which Aśoka's officials employed in the inscriptions at Mansehra and Shahbāzgarhi. That this North-Western dialect retained some archaic or old Indo-Aryan characters is borne out not only by the evidence from the Brāhmaṇas and from the inscriptions of Aśoka, but also from the Greek transcriptions of Indian names heard from speakers of this dialect. Thus

names like Sandrakottos, Sandraphagos, Prasioi, Eronnaboas, Brachmanes, Ottorakorrhas, Amitrokhatés or Amitrokhadés and Palibothra are Greek renderings of *Chandrakupta (a genuine North-Western form for Candragupta, with *-k-* for *-g-* characterising the Darada or Piśāca Prākṛit of the North-West), Candrabhāgā, Prācyā, Hiraṇyavāha, Brāhmaṇa, Uttarakuru, Amitraghāta and *Pāllibutra for *Pad'liputra = Pāṭaliputra as heard in the north-west, where, as partially indicated by the Mansehra and Shahbazgarhi and later North-western inscriptions, groups like *pr*, *tr*, *kr*, *br*, *dr*, *gr*, did not assimilate the *r*.

The relationship between the Aśokan dialects and the later forms of Indo-Aryan can be tentatively indicated as follows :

1. The North-Western dialect—from this originated Hindi, Lahnda, or Western Punjabi, Eastern Punjabi (the latter strongly influenced by the Midlands peech) and Sindhi. This N. W. dialect was taken by Indian settlers to Chinese Turkistan where it was in use for some centuries as an official speech, in the southern part of the country.

2. The Midland dialect : Not represented in the Aśoka inscriptions, but the Gīrnār dialect is probably a form of Midland. From this originated the Western Hindi dialect (partially influenced by the North-Western dialect), and Rajasthāni-Gujarāti.

We do not know anything about an Aryan speech being current in the Deccan, but evidently from Mālava and Gujarat and Varad (h)ā-taṭa (Varhād or Berar) Aryan dialects, mostly from the Śauraseni area, were spreading into Mahārāshṭra.

3. The Eastern dialect. The standard form of it, at first current all over Eastern U. P. (Oudh etc.) and Bihar, differentiated into Eastern Prācyā (Māgadhi) and Western Prācyā (Ardha-Māgadhi). The latter came strongly under Midland influence, and became finally transformed into the Kosali or Eastern Hindi dialects (Awadhi, Bagheli, Chattisgarhi). The former, Māgadhi, spread into Bengal and Assam and Orissa, and it is the source of Bhojpuri, Magahi-Maithili, Bengali-Assamese and Oriya.

There is no evidence from the Nanda and Maurya documents about the spread of the Aryan tongue into the Himalayan regions. Probably the Dardic speaking Aryans (Khasas and other tribes) were penetrating into the Central Himalayan areas (the present

Western Pahari and Eastern Pahari regions), and their Dardic Khasa speech was later overlaid by Indo-Aryan from the Midland.

As for literary Indo-Aryan of the Nanda and Maurya periods we have to reckon first with classical Sanskrit, which became fully established as the language of Brahmanism and Brahman organisation before the Nanda régime. It was at first confined to the Brahman schools, and as a language, in the 5th century B. C. when Pāṇini flourished in the Udīcyā *region*, it was sufficiently near to the spoken dialect of Pāṇini's home districts as to merit from him the name *Laukika* i.e. 'popular or current' as differentiated from the elder Vedic dialect which he called *Chāndasa* or *Chandas* i.e., 'poetic speech' which was tantamount to 'archaic speech'. Classical Sanskrit was not the creation of the Udīcyā people only ; just as the modern literary forms of the Hindi or Hindustani language of Delhi, viz. High Hindi and Urdu, are the creation not only of High Hindi and Urdu writers of Delhi and Agra and Meerut, but also of Lahore and Lucknow and Haidarabad and Mathurā and Allahabad and Benares. The *śiṣṭas* or learned men, i.e. Brahmans, in the Midland, in the Prācyā, and also in the Dākṣhiṇātya, also helped to build it up ; and it came to be closely connected with the Midland as here the Brahman synthesis of Aryan and non-Aryan cultures into Hindu culture and religion seems to have started. Because of its archaic character and the clarity of its forms, it obtained the homage of the Buddhists and the Jains as well, just from the end of the Maurya period.

The Eastern Prākṛit became an important vehicle of religious culture when the message of Buddha and Mahāvira was delivered in it in the 6th-5th centuries B.C. and although it was a very much advanced or degenerate speech from Old Indo-Aryan standards, it obtained some pre-eminence in the Nanda Maurya periods both as the language of the Buddhist and Jaina faiths and official language of the court or of the empire. But this pre-eminence seems to have died out with the passing away of the Mauryan empire.

Pāli as a literary language associated with the Theravāda school of Hīnayāna Buddhism appears not to have been prominent during the Nanda and Maurya periods, if it had come

into existence at all. Buddha gave a great charter to all the languages of mankind when he declared that people were to study his message in their own languages : and we may presume that as a result of this great pronouncement, translations into different dialects were encouraged. There is evidence that the teachings of Buddha were first written in the Eastern Prākṛit. But this form of Aryan speech, in spite of its being the official language of the empire was not a central dialect, but belonged to the easternmost extremity of the empire, and it was most deviated from the norm of the rest of Aryandom. As such it was not much intelligible to the rest of India. The Midland forming the real heart of Āryāvarta, had a dialect which could be understood by the Udīcyā people, as well as by the Prācyas and the Dākṣiṇātyas. It was the precursor of the Śaurasenī, apabrahmśa of late medieaval times (c. 600-1200 A.D.) and of Brajbhākhā (c. 1500-1700) and the Khariboli Hindi or Hindustani of the present day. Buddha's discourses were rendered into the Midland dialect, as current in Mathurā (and extended from Mathurā into Ujjain and Malwa) : after the death of the master, some of his disciples who were from Mathurā had a hand in redacting the canon—at least one version of it ; just as they were rendered into the North-western Prākṛit, as fragments in this dialect recovered from Central Asia show. The same process was repeated in later times : Kabir (15th century A.D.) spoke and composed in the Bhojpuri dialect current in his native city of Benares, and yet his writings are found in a mixed variety of Western Hindi, Brajbhākhā and Khariboli of Delhi with plenty of Awadhi (Eastern Hindi) forms and a few Bhojpuri forms occurring as palimpsests. Mahendra, the son of Aśoka born and brought up in his mother's city of Ujjain, according to the Ceylonese tradition, took the Pāli canon to Ceylon. It is likely that Mahendra studied his Buddhist texts not in the Eastern version as his father evidently did, but in the Midland one (which was Pāli) as it was current in Ujjain.

Pāli does not at all agree with the Māgadhi and Ardha-Māgadhi dialects, later variants of the Prācyā speech—it agrees rather with Śaurasenī, which is the Midland speech as we find it in its later Prākṛit form. Pāli can only be looked upon

linguistically as a literary form of the Midland speech as it was current in the centuries immediately before Christ. The Midland speech in its literary form thus was taken to Ceylon by Mahendra from Ujjain via Pāṭaliputra and Tāmralipti and from there brought back again into North India with the Theravāda doctrine by Buddhaghosha. In the meanwhile, it was coming into prominence from about the time of Christ, as an important and the best cultured form of a Middle Indo-Aryan speech, as Śauraseni Prākṛit, the earliest use of which we find in the drama fragment from Aśvaghosha discovered in Central Asia, and possibly also in Śūdraka's *Mricchakatikā*, a Prākṛit which Bharata noted some time during the early centuries after Christ and which Rājaśekhara lauded as the most elegant form of speech in the 8th century A.D.

The Aryan speech was taken out of India by Indian missionaries or military adventurers who went out of India during the time of the Nandas and Mauryas. In Sin-Kiang, the city of Khotan (*Ku-stana* in Sanskrit) was colonised by Indians from Taxila in the 3rd century B.C., and the Indian community in the Khotan territory became quite numerous and strong, and although they lost their separate existence among the surrounding Iranian and Tibeto-Burmese speaking peoples, the Indian North-Western Prākṛit taken by them continued to be used (in a form much influenced by the local languages) as an official language in all state documents. Indian troops were found in the armies of the Achaemenian emperors and in Xerxes' army there were Indian troops. At the battle of Gaugamela or Arbela where Alexander finally overthrew Darius, the last Achaemenian emperor, Indian troops fought very stubbornly. The Indians came in touch with the Greeks through the Persian empire, and this must have taken place by 500 B.C., when the old form of the word *Iones* (Ionians, the Greeks of Asia Minor who came to be best known in the East) viz., *Iawones* or *Iavones* came to India as *Yavana*. Indian elephants with Indian *mahouts*, were in the army of Pyrrhus when he fought the Romans in the 3rd century B.C. and in the Carthaginian army led by Hasdrubal and Hannibal in Italy, Indian elephant drivers also came into prominence. Indian philosophers and learned men, and later Buddhist missionaries sent by Aśoka, found their way

into Greece, and we have mention in Greek records of at least one Indian philosopher who came to Athens and with whom Socrates had a conversation (before 400 B.C.). There was a good deal of intellectual and cultural intermixture both through the Achaemenian empire and the Greek empire of Alexander and his successors, and the Indian languages (including the newly formed literary speech,*classical Sanskrit) came to acquire a number of Iranian (Persian) and Greek words (e.g. *mudrā*, *dipi* or *lipi*, *nipista*. 'written', *asavāri*, *kshatraṇa*, *kārshā* in *kārshā ṇa*, *tashṭa-tast*, *pusta* etc., and *dramma* from Greek *drakhmé*, *suranga* from *surinks* or *syrix*, *samidā* from *semidalis*, *khalīna*, and astronomical terms which came in later). The languages of the West, Greek specially, similarly obtained a number of Indian words. Connection with China though commerce may have commenced from the 4th century B.C. by way of Assam and South-West China (Yun-nan), and probably before Christ a few Chinese words came to be admitted into Indian languages (e. g. the name *Chīna*—China, *kīchaka*—'a kind of bamboo', *musāra*—'a kind of precious stone'.) There were persons in India speaking Iranian dialects and Greek, and the Persian official language as in the cuneiform inscriptions appears to have exerted some influence on the style of the inscriptions of Aśoka. The presence of different languages side by side in India, Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austric and the foreign Persian and Greek, gave rise to what I have called 'Translation compounds' in Indo-Aryan, in which words of same or similar meaning from two languages are combined to give a single word in Indo-Aryan (e.g. Iranian *Karṣa* 'a monetary unit' and Indo-Aryan *ṇa* of non-Aryan Austric origin—'computation on the basis of four' gave *kārshāṇa* in Sanskrit, *kaḥāṇa* in Pāli, meaning 'a coin'; Austric *sāta*, *sāda* > *sāli* 'horse' and non-Aryan of unknown origin **ghutra*, **hotra* whence we have *ghoṭa* 'horse' gave Sanskrit *sāli-hōtra* 'horse' etc.)

The *rapprochement* between the Indo-Aryan and the Dravidian and Austric speeches was going on intensely during this period when the fusion of the diverse elements of the population into a common Hindu people under the intellectual domination of the Brahmans was in full swing. The Aryan language was being transformed from its purer Indo-European character

into something different under the impact on Non-Aryan, through a larger and larger number of non-Aryan speakers turning into speakers of Indo-Aryan. In Middle Indo-Aryan, the Old Indo-Aryan accent had changed from a free pitch to a fixed stress. Vowel length became dependent more on speech rhythm than on etymology, a tendency towards an open rather than closed pronunciation of syllables became established (this led to widespread assimilation of conjunct consonants 'ushering in the Middle Indo-Aryan stage e.g. *dhar-ma*, *sah-ya*, *bhak-ta*, of earlier Old Indo-Aryan became *dha-rma*, *sa-hya*, *bha-kta*, etc. which were soon assimilated to *dhamma*, *sajjha*, *bhatta*), and there was an increase in the cerebralisation of *t*, *th*, *d*, *dh*, *n*, to *ṭ*, *ṭh*, *ḍ*, *ḍh*, *ṇ* and of *l* to *ḷ* ; also the voicing of the intervocal unvoiced stops and aspirates started by which *loka* became *loga*, *atavī* became *aḍavi* and *aḷavī* etc., and in morphology we note a tendency towards reducing all declensions and conjugations of Old Indo-Aryan to a single type, and the commencement of the use of post-positional help words after case inflexions of the noun ; besides, the inflected tenses and moods of the verb were reduced, and there was a larger use of participial adjectives, present, past and future, to express the timeidea of the finite verb ; further, the conjunctive participle or gerund in the *-tvā* (*-tvī*) and *-ya* became an exceedingly popular form. The vocabulary changed its character : a great many Old Aryans words were dropped, and their places were taken either by new Indo-Aryan formations, or by borrowings from the non-Aryan languages which entered the Aryan language through the back-door (i.e. without scholars admitting that they were non-Aryan words) and by the score. The entire spirit of Indo-Aryan was during the second half of the first millennium B. C. being changed fundamentally, and Aryan was more and more approximating the spirit of Dravidian and Kol (Austrian).

Probably a good deal of the masses, in the Northern Indian plains, particularly among the lower classes, were bilingual, but the fast disappearing non-Aryan was not getting anybody's sympathy. The situation is like what one still sees in certain parts of India like Chota Nagpur and Assam, where the non-Aryan speeches are being steadily pushed out by Aryan.

In the Deccan and South India, except possibly in the Western Deccan right down to the early course of Godāvāri where Aryan settlements were taking place, the non-Aryan languages were reigning supreme. Vidarbha or Varad(h)ā-taṭa (present day Varhād or Berar), and Āsmaka on the Godāvāri, were Aryan states in the Deccan prior to 400 B.C. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, anterior to Buddha, mentions the Andhras, the Śavaras, the Pulindas and the Mutibas as *dasyu* or non-Aryan (probably Dravidian) tribes in the Deccan (of these the Śavaras, probably also the Pulindas were Kol tribes), and North Indian Aryans before the Buddha do not seem to have known much about the Southern Dravidian states. Sindh, from the evidence of the *Baudhāyana Dharma-sūtra*, was, like Bengal, still outside the Aryan pale during the closing centuries before the Christian era; Sindh was probably still Dravidian, a language allied to Brahuī being current in it : and the Greeks say that a tribe named Arabitai lived in south Sindh. But there cannot be any doubt that throughout the whole of southern and eastern Deccan and South India, the ancestors of the Telugus, the Kannaḍas and the Tamil-Malayalis were flourishing as independent states with their distinctive South Indian or Dravidian culture which is best represented in the ancient Tamil literature ascribed to the centuries immediately after Christ. But unfortunately no authentic specimen of a Dravidian language is available before the early centuries of the Christian era.

The Dravidian language-family is now confined to India: but if the original Dravidian speakers were a Mediterranean people, then Dravidian must be relegated to a common stock with the language of the ancient Aegean and Asia Minor peoples who were living in Greece and the Islands and Asia Minor before the Indo-European Hellenes came to Greece. I have suggested that a tribal name of this people was **Dr(a)mil-* or **Dr(a)miž*, which is found in one branch of them in the Island of Crete in the Hellenised spelling as *Termilai*, and in another branch of it in Lycia in Southern Asia minor as *Tīmmili*. Various tribes with their different names naturally made up these Mediterranean invaders of India, and **Dramiž* was evidently one of them. This name was Aryanised as *Dramiḍa* or *Dramiḷa* and then as *Draviḍa*, certainly earlier than the Christian era. Round

about the time of Christ, the name became **Damiḥ* in the mouth of the people who bore the name, and they had by this time been fully settled and had built their culture and founded their states in the extreme south of India. The ancient Sinhalese Aryan-speaking settlers from Gujarat and Sindh, heard this name and wrote it in Pāli and Sinhalese as *Damiḥa*; and Greek and Egyptian traders similarly heard the name as **Damir* and called the country the native name of which was obviously **Damiḥakam* *Damirikē* in Greek. Then certain wide-spread phonetic changes swept the language of the **Dramiḥ-Damiḥ* (and probably also of the Kannadiga) people, among which was the unvoicing of the voiced stops *g j ḍ d b* to *k c ṭ t p*; and in a few centuries after Christ, the language entered a phase which we find in the oldest Tamil texts now found (the Śangam texts), and the name became *Tamiḥ* or *Tamiḷ* which is the form still obtaining in the Tamil language.

Although both Dravidian and Kol influenced the evolution of the Aryan language in the North—this influencing was at its height during the second half of the first millennium B.C during the Nanda-Maurya period—and although culturally and politically highly advanced Dravidian states were flourishing in South India, states which had relations with Aśoka Maurya, it is curious and almost inexplicable why any of the Dravidian speeches did not manifest a literary life during the period under review. The finished character of the old Tamil *poruḷ* or *artha* i.e. matter of poetry, and of old Tamil literary ideas and ideals (dividing, for instance, poetic subjects into two categories of *aḥam* and *puḥam*, roughly corresponding to love and war, subjective and objective), took some centuries to develop, and it can be reasonably expected that during the Nanda and Maurya periods, the cultivated South Indian languages, particularly old Tamil and old Kannada were essaying their first footsteps in the direction of sophisticated or advanced poetic composition, as opposed to purely popular poetry about love and war which we find orally among all peoples in the earlier stages of their history.

The advancement of a language is not possible without writing, and the Aryan speech came to be written down in all likelihood at a time when it made it possible for the Veda books

to be compiled ; and this may well have taken place during the 10th century B.C., which is the date of the Mahābhārata battle and of Vyāsa, according to F. E. Pargiter and Hemchandra Raychaudhuri. The discovery of the Mohen-jo-Daro and Harappa script, with characters seemingly the pictorial prototypes of the Brāhmī letters of the 4th-3rd centuries B.C., now enables us to discard the theory of the Phoenician origin of the ancient Indian alphabet. The Brāhmī script in its oldest form—the proto-Brāhmī of the 10th century B.C. showing but an intermediate stage between the Mohen-jo-Daro script of c 2500 B. C. and the finished Brāhmī of 300 B.C.—could not be, as is natural in a similar situation, the finished alphabet with a scientific and etymologically sound orthography which we see in the Maurya and post-Maurya times. It was at the best a makeshift script, acting rather as a mnemonical writing than a proper and a complete alphabet. The orthography of Brāhmī as used for Prākṛit in the 3rd century B.C. is not yet complete ; thus, e.g. certain consonant combinations are cumbrously made, and double consonants are not indicated at all (*vassa* being written as *vāsa* or as *vāsa*). It was still a rather stumbling medium for the Prākṛit dialects ; it was much more so for Sanskrit. The Kharoshthī script current in the Udīcya country during the period 400 B.C.—A.D.400 is admittedly of Semitic origin, a legacy of the Syrian scribes in the employment of the Achaemenian *sirkar* in India ; and its existence in India was an isolated episode, as isolated as the phenomenon of Gandhāra art. The name would appear to be a folk-etymology in India (whether *khara*+*oshṭha* or ‘ass-lip’ character as advocated by Sten Konow, or *Khara-ushṭra* or ‘ass-and-camel country’ character, as sought to be established by Sylvain Lévi, it is not necessary to take sides) of a Semitic word for ‘writing’ which we find in Hebrew as *Xarōšēṯ* (Kharosheth). The discovery of an inscription of the 4th-3rd century B.C. in Aramaic (Syriac) at Taxila, which has been read by Herzfeld, giving the name of ‘our Lord Priyadarśi’ (*mr'n prydrś*) is a direct proof of the contact of India with Aramaic writing, and helps us to envisage the origin of Kharoshthī.

The Indian Brāhmī alphabet is in all likelihood a derivative of the Mohen-jo-Daro script. But it is strange that a knowledge

of writing should have been obtained by the later Dravidians from the North Indian Aryan speakers round about the time of Christ, if the Mohen-jo-Daro people were really the ancestors of the Dravidians. It is likely that the Mohen-jo-Daro script of c. 2500 and later was a very complicated thing, and when the Aryan alphabet was evolved out of it as a simpler system of writing after the Mohen-jo-Daro civilization had become moribund through Aryan impact as well as internal decay, and the people probably scattered, the simpler alphabet associated with a new and a vigorous people of a composite origin such as the ancient Hindus, descendants of both Aryans and non-Aryans, won the day,—making the more complicated, syllabic script of early Mohen-jo-Daro obsolete ; and this alphabet, as well as the Aryan language of which it was the vehicle, became a conquering force in the South—the old script being no longer current among a probably dispersed people—during the closing centuries of the first millennium B.C.

II. LEARNING, LITERATURE AND POPULAR LIFE

Brahmanical Learning

Though Buddhism gained the support of royalty and captured the hearts of sections of the people, Brahmanism continued in this period to be a great force in society. Neither the output of Brahmanical literature nor the patronage of Brahmanical scholars was impaired in any great degree. It is significant that the notices of the Greek writers of the times contain no mention of the Buddha or the popularity of his new faith, except the solitary reference of Clemens of Alexandria to philosophers who followed the precepts of Boutta¹. Even the edicts of Aśoka call upon people to honour Brahmans. The *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* records that Nanda was a great patron of Brahman Tārkikas, proud of their learning, to whom he gave large sums of money²; the tirade of the same text against Chāṇakya shows the extensive patronage enjoyed by Brahmanism and Brahmanic learning under Chandragupta and Bindusāra, and Kauṭilya on his part does not conceal his animosity towards Buddhism and Jainism and levies a fine of a hundred pieces on

1. McCrindle—*Ancient India as described in classical literature*, p. 67 n.

2. K. P. Jayaswal—*Imperial History of India*, p. 31, Sanskrit text.

one who deceitfully brings to a dinner in honour of the gods and manes any of the śūdra ascetics of the Śākya or Ājīvaka sects¹. In fact every page of Kauṭilya's work confirms the thoroughly Brahmanical mode of life dominating these times ; Kauṭilya speaks of the minister as one qualified in the Vedas and their six *aṅgas* (auxiliaries), mentions the Vedic sacraments and sacrifices, and prescribes Vedīc rites and rituals to ward off every kind of evil and to procure success and prosperity to the people and the king ; he refers to free Brahmadeya lands given to Ritvigs, Ācāryas, Purohitas and Śrotriyas (II, i; III, 10) ; the work is also replete with references to *tāḥsas* and *taḥovanas* ; so much so that it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that, far from affecting adversely the hold of the Vedic way of life, the rise of Buddhism and Jainism had given only a fillip to Brahmanical activity in the various departments of life and literature.

Sanskrit Language

Though the nascent faiths of the Buddha and Mahāvīra had attempted to by-pass the Sanskrit language and contact the masses through the vernacular tongues, Sanskrit did not lose the position as a spoken language or the medium in which subjects of theoretical and practical value were cultivated by the Brahmanas in the several centres of learning. Among such centres Taxila in the north-west and the Mauryan capital Pāṭaliputra itself in the east were the most renowned. The *Bṛhatkathā* and the Buddhistic tradition make Pāṇini, connected with Śālātura in the north-west, a friend of a Magadhan Nanda, and bring Chāṇakya of the Taxila college to Pāṭaliputra in quest of a scholarly disputation ; and Brahmanical tradition recorded by Rājaśekhara speaks of a court of learning at Pāṭaliputra where Upavarsha and Varsha, Pāṇini and Piṅgala, Vyāḍi, Vararuchi and Patañjali attained fame by passing their tests in Śāstras.

The appellation Bhāshā which Pāṇini gives to his language and many of the rules laid down by him are not intelligible except as having reference to a spoken language. Such evidences of Sanskrit being a spoken tongue do not grow less

in Kātyāyana or Patañjali, both of whom mention local and other variations and popular corruptions. That Kātyāyana was a southerner, that southerners delighted in using derivative forms (Taddhita) and that in the South, a big lake or *saras* was referred to as *sarasī* are statements of Patañjali showing the inclusion of the southern regions in the provenance of Sanskrit speech. The well-known dialogue in Patañjali (under Pāṇini II. 4. 56) between the grammarian and the charioteer, *sūta*, involving a grammatical subtlety bears out the fact that Sanskrit speech was not confined to either the academic circles or the learned classes of society. The use of Sanskrit in literature was so securely established that even Buddhism and Jainism which began with using the Prākṛits had to line up early with Sanskrit literary tradition.

In this period the abundant variety of the Vedic morphology had got simplified considerably on both the declensional and conjugational sides and this process of simplification could be seen in progress through the Brāhmaṇas and the older Upanishads. It is such a Bhāshā which Pāṇini codified in order to render it more handy. Even after him a certain amount of fluidity persisted, as evidenced by the necessity for the work of the many Vārttikakāras, but at the close of the period of our study, Patañjali's work finally fixed the language as the unchanging Samskr̥ta. The language had become sufficiently distant from that of the Vedas to be characterised as classic Sanskrit, through its employment all this time in a growing body of epic and poetic literature. The Vedic accent had changed and the free use of verbal forms had given place to what may be called the nominal style characterised by participles; a small loss of vocabulary is to be seen, as also some amount of semantic change; a few new word forms were also added to the language in this period.

Sanskrit Grammar

The legends in the Sanskrit versions of the *Bṛhatkathā* introduce Pāṇini and Vararuchi as contemporaries of the Nandas; the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* also refers to Pāṇini as a friend of the Nanda. On the basis of the *Bṛhatkathā* legends it was held by Max Müller, Weber and others that Pāṇini flourished about

315 B.C.; but as has been proved by several writers from Goldstücker onwards, Pāṇini and Kātyāyana could not have been contemporaries in view of the changes that the language had undergone in the days of the latter, and Pāṇini could at the latest be assigned only to 500 B.C., and in this respect, Tāranāth whose account puts Pāṇini a generation earlier than Kātyāyana is less faulty. In the period of the Nandas and Mauryas, there was indeed a great deal of grammatical activity. The Prātiśākhya are to be referred to the post-Pāṇinian age, and between Pāṇini and Patañjali, there appeared a number of Vārttikakāras who appended their *vārttikas* or *addenda et corrigenda* (*uktā-'nukta-durukta-chintana*) to Pāṇini's aphorisms.

The foremost of the post-Pāṇinian grammarians is Vyāḍi, a descendant of Pāṇini himself removed from him by at least two generations, as we learn from his matronymic Dākshyaṇa, derived from Dākshī, the gotronymic of Pāṇini's own mother. Vyāḍi followed his ancestor's system and produced the grand work (*śobhana* as Patañjali describes it) called *Samgraha* in 100,000 verses. Patañjali held Vyāḍi in as much respect as Pāṇini himself. In fact, Bhartṛhari says at the end of the second book of his *Vākyapadīya* that the *Mahābhāshya* is based on the *Samgraha*. Vyāḍi's view that *vyakti* or *dravya* constituted *padārtha*, as expounded in his *Samgraha* is cited by Kātyāyana, Patañjali (I. ii. 64), Bhartṛhari and others. A grammatical tradition noted in the *Laghu-paribhāshāvṛtti* ascribes the Paribhāshās or the rules for interpreting Pāṇini's Sūtras to Vyāḍi, and some manuscripts, *Vyāḍiparibhāshā* and *Vyāḍiparibhāshāvṛtti*¹, support the tradition. Besides these a lexicon named *Uṭpalinī*, containing a reference to Buddhism, is also remembered as a work of Vyāḍi. As other grammarians of this time like Kātya and Kātyāyana Vararuchi are also quoted in the lexicons, we have to suppose that besides writing grammatical treatises, the authors compiled, somewhat after the manner of the older Nighaṇṭu, lists of words as accessories to their grammatical treatises. The story in the initial book of the several versions of the *Byhatkathā* would make Vyāḍi and Vararuchi class-fellows and friends; Vyāḍi is however, as we have

1. Aufrecht, *Catalogus Catalogorum* I. p. 618b.

seen, one of the authorities quoted by Kātyāyana (I. ii.64).

The mention in these *Bṛhalkathā* legends of an Indradatta in a group of which the two others, Vyāḍi and Vararuchi, are grammarians may lead us to surmise that he too might have been a grammarian, not necessarily a contemporary, and though there is no evidence, it may be suggested that the Aindra grammar mentioned in the traditional accounts as having been superseded by the Pāṇinian and as being the basis of the Tamil system of the *Tolkāppiyam* and of the Sanskrit *Kālāpa*, may in reality be a work of this Indradatta.

The Vārttikakāras of grammar belonging to this age are headed by one whom Patañjali refers to with reverence as Bhagavān Kātya (III. ii. 3) and correspondingly his *vārttikas* are known as Mahāvārttikas in contrast not only to the other miscellaneous *vārttikas* but to those of Kātyāyana Vararuchi himself. In his Bhāshya (IV. ii. 65), Patañjali gives the illustration 'Māhāvārttika' meaning 'one who has studied the Mahāvārttika' and in the encyclopaedic *Śṅgāra Prakāśa* of king Bhoja we actually get quotations of two *vārttikas* from the Mahāvārttikas under Pāṇini II. i. 51 and I. iv. 21. Kātya like Vyāḍi added a lexicon to his grammatical contribution.

As distinct as the Mahāvārttikas, are the metrical dicta of a Vārttika character quoted by Patañjali, which, as can be made out from Bhartṛhari, Kaiyaṭa and Nāgoji, formed part of a work called the *Ślokavārttika*. Coming chronologically after Vyāḍi were the followers of the grammar of Gautama (VI. 2. 36). The other Vārttikas referred to by Patañjali are Bhāradvāja, Saunāga, Kroshtīya, Saura Bhagavad and those of Kuṇi Vāḍava or Kuṇaravāḍava, all of these being later than the *vārttikas* of Kātyāyana on which they have bearing. It is not known if the *Māthurī Vṛtti* mentioned by Patañjali under IV. iii 101 is another Vārttika.

The most important of these Vārttikakāras is the one known generally as the Vārttikakāra of grammar, viz., Kātyāyana alias Vararuchi. From the literary traditions referred to, we may take him to be a contemporary of the Nandas. He is also the author of the *Vājasaneyiprātiśākhya*, where he deals with the language and the grammar of the *Vājasaneyisamhitā*, and the

Kathāsaritsāgara story too makes mention of his proficiency in the Prātiśākhya taught by Vyāḍi (I. 2. 38). In this Prātiśākhya, Kātyāyana gives a number of criticisms of the relevant sūtras of Pāṇini. In his Vārttikas which number about 4,000, he subjects about 1,500 sūtras of Pāṇini to his critical observations, these comprehending on the whole about 10,000 grammatical points. Kātyāyana was neither hostile to Pāṇini nor rash in his criticism as one might be led to believe from the way Patañjali handles him ; the natural phenomena of linguistic change necessitated the compilation of Kātyāyana's corrections and additions. Besides the dicta, Kātyāyana sometimes made his grammatical observations in verses which Patañjali quotes as *bhrājāḥ ślokāḥ* and Kaiyaṭa identifies as Kātyāyana's. As noticed already Patañjali speaks of him as a southerner fond of Taddhita forms, while the *Bṛhatkathā*' story makes him a native of Kauśāmbi, an all-round scholar, sometime minister of Nanda at Pāṭaliputra and an incarnation of a Śivagaṇa known as Pushpadanta. The Buddhistic *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* too mentions him as a minister under Nanda.

The Prātiśākhyas are a class of works designed to preserve Vedic texts correctly, as handed down in their several *sākhās* or groups of *sākhās* (Prati-sākhā) ; and these treatises may generally be assigned to the period between Pāṇini and Patañjali according to Goldstücker, say between 600 B.C. and 200 B.C. Mention has already been made of the *Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhya* of the Vārttikakāra Kātyāyana. As Vyāḍi is several times quoted in the *Rigveda Prātiśākhya* ascribed to Śaunaka, we may assign that Prātiśākhya too to our period. To Vyāḍi himself is ascribed a treatise on *Veda lakṣhaṇa*¹.

Classical Sanskrit Literature and Fine Arts

The Sanskrit versions of the *Bṛhatkathā*, the Jaina *Bṛhatkathā Kośa* of Harisheṇa and the Buddhistic *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* speak of a Subandhu as a Brahman minister of Nanda, Chandragupta and Bindusāra. In Abhinavagupta's commentary on the Nāṭya Śāstra, *Abhinavabhāratī*, there is more than one reference to a Subandhu as a Mahākavi who composed a unique variety

1. Aufrecht, *Catalogus Catalogorum* III part.

of dramatic composition, emboxing one act within another, and making the characters of each preceding act the spectators of its successor ; the work was called the *Vāsavadattā Nūlyadhārā* or the dramatic series of *Vāsavadattā*¹. This *Vāsavadattā* is the Ujjain princess figuring in Udayana's story², with which Subandhu wove one of *Bindusāra* himself. It is this drama of Subandhu that *Vāmana* quotes in his *Kāvya-lāṅkārasūtravṛtti*, where we have the suggestion of Chandragupta's son having difficulties and being helped by wise ministers like Subandhu, a circumstance which is confirmed by the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* referring to *Bindusāra* succeeding to the throne as a boy. A verse on poet Subandhu and his composition featuring *Bindusāra* and *Vatsarāja*, found in a manuscript of the *Avantisundarī* has reference only to this Subandhu whom we may take as the minister under the last Nanda and the first two Mauryan emperors.

The Jain *Bṛhatkathakośa* while mentioning Subandhu along with *Chāṇakya* (story 143), refers to a third minister *Kavi*, which too may be a reminiscence of a literary figure of these times. Of the literary activities of *Kātyāyana Vararuchi*, we can say something definite. *Patañjali's Mahābhāshya* opens our eyes to the rich crop of classical literature produced in these times. Among literary productions mentioned by *Patañjali* with the author's name is a poem by *Vararuchi, Vārarucham Kāvyaṃ* (IV. iii. 101). In *Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa*, a half verse in the *Vasantatilakā* metre from a poetic composition of *Kātyāyana* is quoted³.

The other *Kāvya*s presupposed by *Patañjali* must have all been produced in this period : we have thus a good number of *Ākhyānas* and *Akhyāyikās* on the stories of *Yayāti*, *Yavakṛita*, *Priyaṅgu*, *Sumanottarā*, *Bhīmaratha*, *Vāsavadattā* and the

1. See IHQ. XIX, 1943, pp. 69-71.

2. *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra* has two references to *Udayana's* story; one in IX. 7, his return to power after a flight and another in XIII. 2. where the ruse of capturing one fond of hunt with the aid of an alluring elephant in the *nāgavana* reminds us of *Udayana's* capture by *Pradyota*.

3. Madras Ms. Vol. I Ch. I p. 45 tathā ca *Kātyāyanaḥ* : 'uttarāṅgā jagataḥ prapitāmahena tasmāt padāt tvamasi rajjuriva pravṛittā. This is evidently a praise of the *Ganges*, the celestial river that descended from the heavens, and we know from the *Bṛhatkathā* versions that *Vararuchi* was a great devotee of *Gaṅgā* whom he propitiated and who appeared before *Vararuchi* every day to make him a present of gold.

Daivāsura and Rākshosura on the wars of the Devas and the Asuras (IV. ii. 60 ; IV. iii. 87-8).

Perhaps more value is to be attached to the many citations of verses and parts of verses embodying a highly evolved poetic expression and metrical finish which Patañjali makes in his *Mahābhāshya*, and which should clearly convince us of the high development of Kāvya in this period. We have specimens here of verses of erotic, lyric, panegyric and gnomic poetry ; of lines belonging to a poem on the Mahābhārata theme and of metrical varieties like Anushtubh, Upajāti, Praharshiṇī, Pramitāksharā and Vāsantatilakā ; the grammatical *kārikās* disclose even greater metrical advancement, these employing even rarer metres, Vaktra, Śālinī, Vamśastha, Samānī, Vidyunmālā, Toṭaka and Dodhaka. This metrical material surely points to the existence of prosodial treatises in these times, and we may not be wrong in assigning Piṅgala's *Chhandas-sūtras* to this period. In a verse in Rājaśekhara's *Kāvya-mimāṃsā* enumerating the Śāstrakāras examined at Pāṭaliputra, Piṅgala figures between Pāṇini and Vyāḍī¹, and Haraprasad Śāstri has drawn attention to a tradition recorded in the *Divyāvadāna* that Bindusāra put his son Aśoka to school under Piṅgala Nāga². In the *Abhinavabhāratī* of Abhinavagupta we have quotations from an anushtubh treatise of Kātyāyana on metres, in which Kātyāyana examines the emotional and thematic appropriateness of particular metres.³

Whatever the date of the present text of the *Nāṭya Śāstra* of Bharata, we know that his text incorporates within itself and cites passages and verses handed down to him from the past, *ānuvamśya*. That the histrionic art was not in a crude stage at this time, but was highly developed can be gathered not only from the *Vāsavadattā Nāṭyadhārā* of Subandhu, but also from the sure evidence of Pāṇini's sūtras (IV. iii. 110-1) which say that even so early, the actors' art had been codified into two texts of aphorisms (Naṭasūtras) by two different authors Śīlālin and Kṛṣāśva. More important than Patañjali's reference to Śobhanikas who show Kamsavadha and Balibandhana is his

1. *Kāvya-mimāṃsā*, GOS, p. 55.

2. *Magadhan Literature*, p. 36.

3. *Journal of Oriental Research, Madras* vi pp. 222-3.

reference to the actor who feels the *rasa* which he acts *rasiko naṭah* (V. ii. 59). The repeated mention in the *Arthaśāstra* of accomplished courtezans, *naṭas* and *nartakas*, supports the view that dance and drama prevailed as popular and evolved forms of art at this time. The ancillary art of music too is spoken of by Kauṭilya both in its vocal and instrumental form. *Gīta*, *vādyā*, *kuśilava*, *śilpakārikāḥ*, *śilpavatyaḥ striyaḥ* (I. 12), *ātodya* (I. 21), *natas*, *nartakas*, *gāyanas*, *vādana* (II. i), *pāṭhya*, *nṛta*, *nātya*, *vīṇā*, *veṇu*, *mṛidaṅga*, *raṅgopajivinīs* (II. 27) and the specific mention of *prekshā* or dramatic show seen by the king (XIII. 2)—these in Kauṭilya picture a time and society which delighted in the arts of music, dance and drama. The fine art of painting occurs in *chitrālekhyā* (I. 16) ; and the numerous references to the images of gods (*devapratimās*) give a glimpse into sculptural art of these times.

The dramatic variety called *Vithī* as described by Bharata involves a good deal of verbal ingenuity, wit and foiling of one another in repartees. That such an art of verbal skill was cultivated in these times is shown by the frequent mention by Kauṭilya of a social entertainer called *vāgjivana* (II. 1 ; II. 27 ; III. 14).

Not only had much poetry been produced by this time, but factors of poetic appeal and appreciation had also come to be analysed ; already in Yāska we find several classes of simile or *upamā* and several words expressive of similarity (*upamāvāchakas*) ; in Pāṇini, in addition to several rules involving simile, we have the actual mention of *Upamā* and *Sāmānya-śabda*. In the chapter on the writing of *Śāsana* or a royal document, Kauṭilya enumerates and defines in his *Arthaśāstra* excellences or *guṇas* pertaining to calligraphy and literary composition ; *arthakrama* or the proper order of ideas, *sambandha* or cogent development of the theme, *paripūrṇatā* or fulness in respect of idea, expression, arguments and illustrations, these being adequate and at the same time not superfluous, *mādhurya* or sweetness and charm of words and ideas, *audārya* or dignified utterance and *spasṣatva* or the use of well-known words ; in the same context, Kauṭilya speaks of *doshas* or defects of writing and composing, *vyāghāta* or mutual contradiction, *punarukta* (redundance) and *apaśabda* (grammatical flaw).

Religious literature, Purāṇa, Dharma, Śrauta and Gṛhya Sūtras

Kauṭilya defines Veda as Trayī but immediately adds that Atharvan and the Itihāsas also are Vedas (I.3); in the subsequent chapters very large use is made of the Artharvaṇic practices of Śānti, Puṣṭi and Ābhichāra; the separate mention and juxtaposition with Itihāsa shows however that the Atharvan had not yet become completely canonised and that this was the time when it was coming into increasing prominence and acceptance. Confirmation of this may be had from the *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra* which defines Veda primarily as the three Vedas but says at the end that all the popular arts and lores which are current among women and śūdras are to be brought under the Atharvan. (II.11.29.11-12.) The six Vedāṅgas (*Arthaśāstra* I.3., I.9) and Itihāsa-Purāṇa (*ib.* I.5, V.6) are mentioned. That some Purāṇas had already come into being is proved also by the *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra* which besides referring to Purāṇas quotes verses from Purāṇas (I.6.19.13 and II.9.23.3), the metrical imperfection of a few lines here indicating their antiquity. A *Bhavishyat Purāṇa* is expressly mentioned by Āpastamba II. 9. 24. 6. Kauṭilya refers to Itivṛtta and Purāṇa (I. 5.) and to Dharma Śāstra (I. 5 and III. 1) ; he speaks of Arthaśāstra (I. 5) and Āsramadharmā (I. 12). These as well as the numberless references to Yajana, Prāyaścitta, Śānti, Homa etc., in the *Arthaśāstra* show that by this time the Dharma, Śrauta and Gṛhya Sūtras had come into being and were in full force. The Vārttikakāra Kātyāyana also knows Dharmāśāstra (I. 12. 64). According to MM. Kane, to the Nanda-Maurya age could be assigned the Dharma-sūtras of Gautama, Baudhāyana, Āpastamba, Vasishṭha, Viṣṇu in part, Hārīta and Śāṅkha-Likhita. Bühler also considers the *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra* to have been produced in the five centuries before Christ¹, and that both Gautama and Baudhāyana were earlier than Āpastamba. These Dharma sūtras form one part of the Kalpa sūtras and deal with the duties of varṇas and āsramas. The other two parts of the Kalpa sūtras are the Śrauta and Gṛhya sūtras, and we may take it that where we have Śrauta, Gṛhya and Dharma sūtras by the same author, as for instance Āpastamba, they were all of identical authorship and formed part of one integral kalpa or manual of

1. Sacred Books of the East, Vol. 2, Introduction.

ritual and conduct of that school. According to the ideology of these sūtras, life is not something to be lived as the body and mind please, but a disciplined activity towards sublimation through a series of sacramental acts, Vedic and domestic rites, and personal samskāras from the time of conception to death. Human nature is here smelted and purified in these acts of Karman and Dharma, or as Kālidāsa puts it, the raw stone of man is ground, polished, and cut into a gem of a Dvija by these processes (*Raghuvamśa* III. 18).

Philosophy

The Dharma sūtras speak of four stations of life (āśramas), student, householder, ascetic and forest-dwelling hermit. The last two stages were devoted to a life which stood in contrast to that of the first two. While the former emphasised a life of Karma or ordained acts, the latter showed the path of contentment, renunciation and the seeking of the knowledge of the soul or ātman as the means to the supreme welfare. The older Upanishads must have certainly come into being by this time and the path of ātmajñāna declared by them greatly prized. We know from Pāṇini that there were already in his days codified Sūtras bearing on the life and conduct of Bhikshus or mendicants by two different authors Pārāśarya and Karmanda (IV. iii. 110-1). These Bhikshus were also known as Parivrājakas and Maunins as the Dharma Sūtras show (Āpast. II. 9.21; Baudh. II. vi. 14; Gaut. III. 2). Gautama (III. 10. 11) refers to Upanishads and Vedānta and in the Adhyātmapaṭala (I. 8. 22-23) of the *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra* we have an epitome of the doctrine of Ātmajñāna as taught in the Upanishads. However the general teaching of the Dharma Sūtras was in favour of combining an observance of Dharma with Jñāna as can be seen in Āpastamba (II. 9. 21) who refutes the doctrine of Jñāna as the sole means of welfare. The Vānaprastha of these texts is identical with Strabo's Hylobioi or forest dwellers, a subdivision of the Śramaṇas (Greek sarmanes); their mode of life was regulated by the institutes of their school, and Baudhāyana (II. 6. 14) defines Vānaprastha as one who follows the institutes of the *Vaikhānasa Śāstra* which was thus a text in existence at that time.

These evidences show that when Buddhism arose and even earlier still, Brahmanism had within its fold its own class of mendicants and ascetics, and that the term Śramaṇa need not refer exclusively to the Buddhist ascetics. In Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* too, references are only to these Brahmanical ascetics. Kauṭilya mentions Parivrājaka, Tāpasa, Muṇḍa and Jaṭila (I. 10, 11, 12), Śramaṇas (I. 12), Vānaprastha and Yati (III. 16), Tāpasas, Tapovanas, Tapasvins, and Āśramas (II. 2, II. 35, 36, III. 9 and IV. 3), and Muṇḍas and Jaṭilas with pupils inhabiting mountain caves (XIII. 2). Kauṭilya imposes punishment on those renouncing life without making proper provision for their family (II. 1, 28) which is understandable as a stricture passed on the easy increase in the Buddhist ascetic fold.

It is remarkable that Kauṭilya refers more than once to female ascetics (I. 12 ; III. 3, 4). That Brahmavādinīs were not taboo within the Brahmanical fold is proved not only by the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* but by an illustration of Patañjali as well. Patañjali speaks of women studying the Mīmāṃsā of Kāśakṛtsna (IV. i. 14), and as Kāśakṛtsna is an author cited by Bādarāyaṇa in his *Vedānta Sūtras*, we may take it that the Mīmāṃsā of Kāśakṛtsna referred to by Patañjali was an Uttaramīmāṃsā text current in that time. But such women ascetics or students of philosophy must have been few.

A certain amount of metaphysical discussion on even such topics as the exact nature and identity of the import of a word (padārtha) is seen from Kātyāyana's reference to Vyāḍi holding vyakti or dravya to be padārtha. Āpastamba twice refers to Vedic interpretation as being decided by principles of Nyāya, and as Bühler has pointed out, we have here nearly the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Śāstra. Upavarsha, whom the legends in the *Bṛhatkathā* assign to Pāṭaliputra of this period and whom Rājaśekhara's verse also connects with Pāṭaliputra, is known from later references as an old author on Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṃsās. More definite is Kauṭilya's reference to philosophical branches of learning and study, Ānvīkshikī (I. 2) which, according to him, comprised Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Lokāyata. The last is a school of material philosophy ; Sāṅkhya is to be taken as knowledge in general, and Yoga as observance of ordained Dharma, or other purificatory practices or Hetuvidyā. In Baudhāyana

(II. vi. 30) there is an interesting discussion on āśramas ; it is said that the fourfold classification of āśramas is not authoritative, that the householder's is the only āśrama and that one Kapila, an Asura, son of Prahāda, devised this fourfold division. It can be seen that the four āśramas fall into two groups of two, Brahmachārin and Gṛhastha observing the ordained Dharmas ; and the Vānaprastha, who retired from home to forest, and Bhikshu who was not particular about a life of Karma. The Dharmasūtrakāras as believers in Karma are, it is to be expected, always for upholding the Gṛhastha, while the philosopher will denounce the Gṛhastha's futile routine and hold up the latter āśramas as capable of bringing real solace to the soul and freedom from the threefold distress. Now Kapila, author of the Sāṅkhya, is one of our earliest philosophers who belittled Karma and advocated Jñāna or Viveka. As this path of knowledge gained greater popularity, its adherents had to be approved of and assigned a place in the accepted scheme of things, and thus probably did the āśramas amplify themselves.

That philosophical debate and systematic investigation of subjects had advanced in this period is borne out by the thirty-two topics of methodology in the exposition of a system of thought, called Tantrayuktis, which Kauṭilya enumerates, defines and illustrates at the end of his work, and most of which became later part of the Nyāya system of Akshapāda.

Arthaśāstra

The entire Mauryan age is dominated by two remarkable records, one of literature and the other of epigraphy, viz. the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and the edicts of Aśoka. It is needless to add anything here on the *Arthaśāstra* which has received full treatment in the historical sections. It is enough to point out that Kauṭilya refers to his own work as a critical compendium based on the Arthaśāstras, prevalent at his time, and that he refers to works of nearly a dozen writers, Bhāradvāja (Kaṇṇika), Viśālākshā (Śiva), Parāśara, Piśuna (Nārada), Kauṇapadanta (Bhishma), Vātavyādhi (Uddhava), Bāhudantiputra (Indra), the Mānavas, the Bārhaspatyas, Auśanasas and Āmbhīyas. This active exercise of thought on polity, echoes of which are to be heard in the epic *Mahābhārata*, might well have been

occasioned by the intense political activity of the times which were full of Saṅghas of different description and numerous small monarchies. That leaders of thought such as the Brahmans took a leading part in the political life of the country is shown by the evidence of Greek writers like Plutarch who say that the philosophers gave Alexander no less trouble than the mercenaries by reviling the princes who declared for him and encouraged the free states to revolt from his authority. The mercenaries referred to by the Greek writers were the Āyudhajivi Kshatriyā Saṅghas, just as the robbers referred to by them were the Āraṭṭas (Arāshṭras) or republicans. The genius of Chandragupta and Chāṇakya saw the danger of these numerous small free states, communities and kingdoms, and not only consolidated an empire and a centralised power but also set forth the scheme of the detailed working of such a huge centralised authority in a new *Arthaśāstra*.

Kāma-Śāstra

While the Dharma, Śrauta and Gṛhya Sūtras are concerned with one side of life as a round of sacramental rites, performance of rituals and sacrifices, and observance of social, religious and spiritual codes of conduct, quite another side of it, the gaiety and joy of life, is represented by the numerous references to the courtesan and her *milieu* in the *Arthaśāstra*. The courtezans were so popular that they could be effectively employed in the machinery of state. Śilpakārikās and śilpavatyāḥ striyaḥ (I. 12), veśyās (II. 6), gaṇikas who served the king with their kuśilavakarman, singing, (II, 27); raṅgopajivinīs (II. 27), kauśikastriyaḥ, gāyanas, and nartakis (XI. 1)—all formed such a vital part of the polity that a special superintendent was appointed to look after their organized management (Gaṇikādhyaksha). Not only was their life regulated by a government department, but the art of love was also codified by an eminent authority on erotics. The Mauryan capital, Pāṭaliputra, was renowned for its courtezans and Vātsyāyana tells us in his *Kāma Sūtra* (II. i. 11) that at the request of the courtezans of Pāṭaliputra, Dattaka who must have lived at this time codified the courtesan's art, *Vaiśika*. Kauṭilya also mentions the *Vaiśikakalā* (II. 27). The gay side of life is to be seen also in the dictum of Kauṭilya that

one ought not to deny oneself pleasures (na nissukhaḥ syāt, I. 7) and by his allotment to the king of the sixth part of the day for enjoyment (svaira-vihāra, I. 19). The cities had halls and gardens intended for recreation (vihārārthāḥ śālāḥ ārāmāḥ, II. 1) ; gambling was in vogue especially in the republican communities to a dangerous extent (VIII. 3) ; gambling and drinking halls were provided for (II. 26, 36) ; people went to the festivals and gatherings for entertainment, utsavas, samājas and yātrās (II, 26. XIII. 2. 3), and water-sports and sylvan games were also indulged in (XIII. 2, V. 2).

Popular Worship

There were temples where people worshipped images, and Kauṭilya names a number of popular deities in worship in his time. The temples (koshṭhas) were in the north-west part of the city for gods and goddesses like Aparājita, Apratihata, Jayanta, Vaijayanta, Śiva, Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera), Aśvins and Śrī (Lakshmi) (II. 4). Deities of Vāstu (site) and Dik (quarters) were adored (II. 4), and to ward off natural calamities or to invite natural benefits, people made offerings and oblations and incantations of peace, worshipping Fire. Rivers, Indra, Gaṅgā, Seashore, Forests (Vanayāga), Mountains, and Caityas of Rākshasas (IV. 3). People went on pilgrimages to holy places, Puṇyasthānas (II. 35-36, III. 9-10) and Tirthāyatanas (II. 35). Nāga-pratimās or Snake-images and Dhvajapratimās or flag-staffs standing for some deities were objects of worship. Persons who practised inferior magical arts invoked Bali, Śambara, Vairocana, presiding deities of several Narakas, sages like Nārada, Devala, Sāvarṇi and Gālava, Manu, Devas and Devalokas, Vedic scholars, Siddhas, Tāpasas, Brahmā, Brahmāṇi, Paulomī, Tantukaccha a great Asura, and others of his class (XIV. 1).

Popular lores

A notice of works of literature, grammar or philosophy does not exhaust the branches of knowledge and lore which prevailed at this time and played an important part in popular life. Other arts and lores are reflected in the *Arthaśāstra*. Kauṭilya speaks of astrologers and experts in omens, mauhūrtikas and

naimittikas (I. 9, 12 ; IV. 4 ; V. 3.), readers of fortune from physical features, Lakṣhaṇa (I. 12) and Aṅgavidyā (XIII. 1), magicians and sorcerers (Jambhaka-vidyā, Māyā and Māyā-yoga, I. 12 and IV. 3), snake charmers (Jāṅgalivids), adepts in black magic (kṛtyābhicāraśīlas IV. 4, XIV), minstrels (śūtas and māgadhas), oracles (praśna-vidyā), and readers of dreams and birds' voices (svapna-pakshi-vyāhāra, XXIII. 1). The lore of the serpent, (IV. iii. 13) mentioned even in the Upanishads, is noticed by Arrian too.

Of more important subjects, Kauṭilya speaks of a highly developed art of healing, producing and counteracting diseases poisons, etc. (XII), maternity and care of the child (I. 17, kumārabhṛtyā and garbhabharman) and of the profession of the doctor, cikitsaka (I. 18). He refers to the lapidary art (II. 2), to the science of agriculture (kṛṣhitantra, II. 25) and the science of plant-life (vṛkshāyurveda) and to the astronomical factors favourable for cultivation. He speaks of reading others' minds, perfumer's art, garlanding and shampoo (II. 27). There was an advanced veterinary science pertaining to the elephant and horse (II. 30, 31). Mineral science, dhātu-śāstra, is also mentioned in Kauṭilya (II. 12).

Architecture

The development of architecture is seen in Kauṭilya's elaborate description of the fort and the palace and their various parts including mechanical manipulations (yantras). Secret passages within walls (gūḍha-bhitti-sañcāra) and underground ways (suraṅgas) were devised (I. 20). In the same place fire-proofing is also mentioned. Śulbaśāstra is referred to expressly (II. 12 and 25). Special buildings with suitable features are described for elephants and horses ; pleasure-halls (vihāraśālās II. 1), drinking halls with rooms, seats, couches, garden etc. (pānāgāra II. 26, III. 8), gambling halls (dyūtāvāsa II. 36) and hospitals (II. 6) are other special types of buildings mentioned by Kauṭilya. The architectural magnificence of the Mauryan capital is borne out by the testimony of the Greek writers and by excavations. It has already been pointed out that the *Arthaśāstra* contains numerous references to temples and images (I. 6, 18, II. 1. 4. II. 6, 33, 36, III. 9, 10, 16, IV. 10, V. 2

XIII. 1, 3.). Idols for worship were highly popular and Deva-dānas and Deva-dravyas were guarded by village elders (I. 18, II. 1), a superintendent looking after all temples (II. 6), and from a reference in Patañjali we know that the Mauryas probably augmented their revenues by a share in the fees forthcoming in the popular worship of images.

Prākṛit, Buddhistic and Jain literature

The earliest literature of Buddhism and Jainism which arose and grew in Kosala and Magadha adopted the Prākṛit as its vehicle of expression. Tradition which is late and which receives support from some citations in works like the gloss of Malayagiri on a Jain work and from a reference in Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa*, ascribes a Prākṛit grammar to Pāṇini himself, but this is only a late attempt to invest Prākṛit with a status equal to that of Sanskrit. Equally undependable is the ascription of the *Prākṛitprakāśa* on the Mahārāshṭrī and other dialects to Vararuchi, the Vārttikakāra, for the languages dealt with here are of later form. The early Ardhamāgadhi originals of the Jain canon have not survived, what we now have being later redactions.

The Buddhistic canon was in Pāli which had close affinities with Pāiśācī. Pāli-Paiśācī, and in fact all the later Prākṛits, owe their origin, according to Hoernle¹ to the ways in which the non-Sanskritic populations of the different localities spoke the Sanskrit tongue. Konow² draws attention to the fact that according to a Tibetan tradition the Sthaviras or Theras had their books in Pāiśācī, and that according to Pischel these Pāiśācī books may be the Pāli canon. Pāli-Paiśācī dialects with slight local variations were current in wide parts of India from the north-west to the Deccan, and it is this language which influenced or bore affinities to the Dravidian.³

Any considerable or authentic Prākṛit material of this time that we possess is confined to the edicts of Aśoka. The language of these edicts is in three dialects, closely related to one another and exhibiting only slight differences, one of these the eastern, prevalent in Magadha and the language of the capital, gave

1. ZDMG. 64 (1910) pp, 103-4, 118.

2. Ibid. p. 103,

3. Ibid. pp. 107-118.

Imperial Majesty King Aśoka presenting himself with quiet dignity before the people of Kalinga. The Sārnāth quadripartite is on the other hand an exhibition of imperial pomp, power and authority before the Buddhist monks that had chosen the site of the First Turning of the Wheel as their place for the quiet pursuit of the religion of Śākyamuni. Compared to the Dhauli elephant the Sārnāth quadripartite and its Sāñchī counterpart are bombastic in style.

The Sankissa elephant is on a lower level of artistic conception. In spite of an appearance of movement the huge and plumpy animal is plastically speaking comparatively static, though there is some evidence of movement in the modelling of the muscles and of the volume of live flesh of the hind portion and the legs. The front legs are however treated pillar-like though the intended effect was presumably one of tension, since the animal appears to shrink backwards with the body-weight pressed in that direction. This attitude of the body, by the way, fails to harmonise with the abacus and the capital below. From Dhauli to Sankissa there is a steady direction, it seems, towards a stylised treatment of the plastic volume, of muscles and body-flesh. This is evident in the treatment of the upper but more in the lower portion of the chest and abdomen of the Sankissa elephant, but nowhere increasingly more and more than in the lion-figures.

Compared to the Basarh-Bakhira lion, the Lauriya-Nandangarh example is more tense and tight without doubt; the surface treatment is also more clear and precise. On the whole the stylisation of the treatment of veins, muscles and flesh is on the increase, the form and treatment tends to be more conventional. In visualisation and realistic presentation of volume there is however hardly any advance, nor is there any attempt to harmonise the animal form with the component parts of the columns below.

From the Lauriya-Nandangarh specimen to the Rampurva lion there is a decided advance in the clear and precise cutting of the stone, in general finish, in the feeling for form and in linear rhythm. There is also an evident advance in modelling which is powerful and vigorous, specially in the muscle and thews, but the entire artistic conception is conventional and treatment

stylised which is nowhere more evident than in the schematic treatment of the manes and the almost lifeless and conventional presentation of the legs and paws. Yet, compared to the Sārnāth quadripartite the Rampurva lion as a piece of independent sculpture must be considered artistically superior, though the former, architectonically speaking, is more advanced since nowhere else in the Maurya columns has been achieved a better and more efficient harmony with the abacus and the capital.

The Rampurva bull is architectonically less advanced than the lion from the same place since 'it fails to harmonise with the capital on which it stands'¹. Marshall argues that it is not 'so well-executed as the (Rampurva) lion'. If he means that it is not as tense and tight in formal appearance or does not show as conventionally powerful and modelled treatment or stylisation of form he is undoubtedly correct. But at the same time it has to be recognised that the artist responsible for this piece of sculpture had a remarkable sense of form as well as of plastic volume and of the quality of the flesh. Here is indeed realistic vision and close observation of nature and full understanding of the character of the object ; nothing stylised or conventional or abstract has blurred the mental image of the artist or stood in the way of his execution. The animal is supposed to stand with full weight on earth in quiet and restrained dignity, and the artist has rendered that idea with remarkable clarity and perfect realism. Here too the modelling is vigorous but not conventional, plastic and linear sense fully mature but not schematised ; the energy and vitality that are within express themselves in restrained but powerful dignity ; a dynamic naturalism gives it potency and strength.

A comparison with the vigorously striding bull on the abacus of the Sārnāth column is at once suggested. Here the bull is rendered with all the tension and accentuation of muscles, veins and bones that a vigorous movement brings into play ; the sense of linear rhythm and plasticity of volume are also fully in evidence ; the execution is clear and precise, but it is at the same time hard to deny that the entire treatment is conventional in as much as the muscles are unduly exaggerated, the tension

1. *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, p. 1088.

in movement overemphasised and the modelling coagulated. A different aesthetic vision and tradition are indeed at work here.

The Sārnāth quadripartite is on a most superior level and must be admitted to be a very successful solution of a problem the Maurya artists grappled with from the very beginning. Of all Maurya sculptures it is the best known, most highly spoken of and reproduced on most occasions. Marshall is justified in saying that 'the Sārnāth capital, though by no means a masterpiece, is the product of the most developed art of which the world was cognisant in the third century B.C.—the handiwork of one who had generations of artistic effort and experience behind him. In the masterful strength of the crowning lions, with their swelling veins and tense muscular development, and in the spirited realism of the reliefs below, there is no trace of primitive art. So far as naturalism was his aim, the sculptor modelled his figures direct from nature, and has delineated their forms with bold, faithful touch. . . . Equally mature is the technique of his relief work.'¹ But at the same time it must not be lost sight of that the entire conception and execution is conventional from beginning to end. Compositionally the accumulation of form of the four semi-lions is schematic, though from consideration of technique clever and efficient. The veins and muscles are overemphasised, and with all their seeming tenseness and bold delineation appear lifeless and conventional. The heads with gaping mouths and curved moustaches treated conventionally are more decorative and ornamental than endowed with real life; the same is true of the manes treated conventionally and arranged schematically. The extravagance of form saps the life out of the object that it represents, though from the point of view of technique the art is fully developed and civilised and its appearance conscious and conventional.

The animal reliefs on the abacus are all worked almost in the round showing deep contrast of light and shade. Technically therefore they are far in advance of the row of pecking geese that decorates the Rampurva lion abacus, though the latter is very realistically treated and imparts a sense of movement that

1. *C. H. I*, I, p. 620.

comes from life itself. One of the four animals of the Sārnāth abacus is a galloping horse very spirited in movement, and the modelling and treatment of its plastic volume partake of the same conventional attitude and execution as those of the lions discussed above. This is equally applicable to the two other animals on the abacus namely the vigorously striding lion and the humped Indian bull, the forms and types in each case having been already fixed by convention, as we shall see later on. The only animal on the abacus that is treated in a different manner and viewed from a different attitude is the elephant slowly striding forward. It is much less conventional and the modelling shows a more realistic feeling for plasticity of volume, though the form has been but inadequately realised. Compared to the Dhauli elephant the elephant of the Sārnāth abacus looks like a wooden toy.

The Sāñchī counterpart of Sārnāth belongs to the same style and is equally conventional and stylised. The manes of the lions are rendered with increasing schematisation which is perhaps an indication of a date later than Sārnāth. Architectonically it conforms to the solution already achieved at the latter place, but the Sāñchī abacus which is decorated like the Rāmpurva lion capital with a row of pecking geese done in higher and bolder relief, is narrower than the Sārnāth one, and is aesthetically more in harmony with the capital below and the crowning lions above.

It is somewhat curious that the lions in Mauryan art are always and invariably done in a manner that seems already to have been fixed by convention. Their formal pose and appearance, the rendering of their volume, bold and vigorous but stylised, their plastic conception in one word, and the sense of form as revealed in them are on the whole the same and already pre-determined. The trend of the style is already evident in the Basarh-Bakhira lion and it is within the limits of the given trend that the style evolves and advances in treatment and execution. The aesthetic vision and imagination and the attitude and outlook of the artist do not mark any definite change. This is partly true as well of the lion, the horse and the bull on the Sārnāth abacus. It raises the presumption that this style and convention came from outside where they were already fixed and

well established. The horse on the Sārnāth abacus in its movement and modelling recalls the two horses in the relief on the Sarcophagus of the Amazons¹ ; the vigorously striding lion and the bull recall well-known Achaemenian prototypes of the same style and convention². Even the elephant on the abacus has a distant kinship with the horned elephants on the early coins of the Seleucids, though the Sārnāth elephant is much less conventional and shows somewhat a different sense of form and treatment.

The aesthetic vision and imagination and the conventional style and fixed expression just spoken of are most evident in the crowning lions. Compared with later figural sculptures in the round of Yakshas and their female counterparts or the reliefs of Bhārhut, Sāñchī and Bodhgayā, the art represented by these crowning lions belongs to an altogether different world of conception and execution, of style and technique, altogether much more complex, urban and civilised. They have nothing archaic or primitive about them, and the presumption is irresistible that the impetus and inspiration of this art must have come from outside. Did it come from the Achaemenian west? This seems to be very doubtful, for the modelling of these sculptures has nothing in common with Achaemenian sculptures, nor does the powerful feeling for volume and preference for rounded forms have anything in common with Achaemenian Iran. Moreover West-Asiatic art, especially Iranian Art during the Achaemenian period came heavily under the influence of Hellenistic Art ; further, 'the few attempts made in Iran in the domain of free plastic art bear an entirely different stamp in their preference for angular forms'³. Marshall therefore argued for Hellenistic plastic tradition as practised by Graeco-Bactrian artists. From what we know of the Hellenistic colonies in West Asia and the part they played in Mauryan India, it is possible, nay highly probable, that Hellenistic art and culture played also a very dominant rôle in Mauryan Art. The Mauryan lions indeed in their aesthetic conception and plastic vision, in their

1. Carotti, *A History of Art*, I, p. 218, fig. 298.

2. Perrot & Chipiez, *History of Art in Persia*, p. 407, fig. 195 ; *C. H. I.*, p. 463, Pl. II, figs. 1 and 2.

3. Bachhofer, *Early Indian Sculpture*, I p. 6—7.

conventional modelling, advanced visualisation, feeling for volume and sense of form invariably recall conventional and decadent colonial Greek works of the same art-form and design. It is here that we can trace the source of the impetus and inspiration of the conventional art of the crowning lions of Mauryan columns. Here then, in a tradition familiar with lions and bulls and horses, was the convention fixed and determined.

These remarks are however hardly applicable to the Dhauli elephant or the Rampurva bull which both seem to belong to a somewhat different aesthetic vision and outlook, perhaps to a different art-tradition. True, indeed, so far as feeling for volume and its reproduction are concerned they belong to the same fully developed stage of art as the crowning lions discussed above and that there is nothing archaic and primitive about them ; but it is equally true there is nothing conventional about them as well, and the plastic sense and method of treatment is altogether different. The modelling betrays a full knowledge of the softness of the flesh and of the flowing current of life that is within ; it is also restrained and is not contaminated by any conventional exaggeration or localised emphasis. Nor is there any evidence of schematisation of form. Indeed these two examples (with the Sankissa elephant as a close third) represent a different aesthetic outlook, a different art-tradition than those of the crowning lions and the lion, horse and bull reliefs on the Sārnāth abacus. This difference in outlook and tradition is clearly brought to the fore when the Rampurva bull is compared with the relief of the same animal from the Sārnāth column ; the two bulls belong to two different worlds as it were. It is, I think, permissible to assume that it is Indian aesthetic vision and imagination and Indian art-tradition that are here largely at work, so far as art-style at least is concerned. The same plastic conception and quality of modelling constitute the pivot round which early Indian art moves, and the same restraint and quiet dignity are the qualities that Indian art ideal has sought to achieve in higher art from the very beginning. Moreover, if the Dhauli and Sankissa elephants, particularly the former be compared with the figures of elephants in bold and high relief in the frieze of the facade of the Lomaśa Rishi cave, it will at once be seen that they belong to the same style

and tradition of art. This cave may not be of Mauryan date, but it cannot be very much later also ; all scholars recognise that the entire facade of this cave is the exact and literal translation in stone of a wooden prototype. It may be assumed therefore that figures of elephants in the same style and tradition as we see them on the stone-facade were already being rendered in wood for generations before they came to be transferred on stone. It is not unlikely that in the Dhauli elephant, the Rampurva bull and partly in the Sankissa elephant, all of which are decidedly Indian in feeling, appearance and spirit, we but witness the traditional Indian conception of these objects and the older or contemporary Indian art-style and tradition transferred into stone in terms of the requirements of that particular material and according to the dictates of bolder designs and bigger dimensions. The mastery of the third dimension, in other words the solution of the difficult problem of free figure as revealed in them, is the only lesson the artists seem to have learnt from Graeco-Bactrian art-tradition. But here too it is possible to present the counter-hypothesis that there must have existed in pre-Mauryan India an art of wood-carving and clay-modelling that carved and modelled free and round figures of men and animals out of wood and clay, and perhaps also of big dimensions.

It is difficult to say anything about the nationality of the artists of the Maurya court ; there is no evidence on the point. But from what has been said above, it is permissible to assume that the Dhauli elephant, the Rampurva bull and perhaps also the Sankissa elephant are works of Indian artists working in contemporary Indian style and tradition, and having a thorough mastery of the third dimension and a full consciousness of the Indian outlook. The crowning lions of the early phases, namely the Basarh-Bakhira and Lauriya-Nandangarh examples, are also works of Indian artists but tutored in the style and tradition of contemporary Western art ; this is marked in the grappling with the problem of form and its precise execution evident in these sculptures. There is decided advance in the Rampurva, Sarnāth and Sāñchī specimens ; this may have been achieved by the same Indian artists working increasingly in the direction of contemporary Western art, or by colonial artists of the Hellenistic Orient imported by the Maurya Court. In any case, there

are in these specimens a strong and undeniable Hellenistic stamp that may not have been imprinted by Indian hands.

V

Alleged Mauryan Sculptures

Besides the animal sculptures described and discussed above, quite a considerable number of independent figure sculptures in the round and of various size and proportion and a few fragments of reliefs have been ascribed to the Maurya period¹ mainly on the ground of their having the so-called Mauryan polish on them and their being carved out of grey sandstone from Chunar. These are insufficient grounds indeed. The art of giving a lustrous polish to the stone, the Maurya artists learnt evidently from the Achaemenians and once they practised it in large scale and made it current, it is only in the nature of things that the practice would continue for some time at least, and at least in stray instances even when the power and authority of the Maurya court had vanished and Maurya court art that apparently found in this polish an expression of imperial glory and splendour had become a thing of the past. Nor is the argument of a common place of origin so far as the material is concerned more potent. Stone as the material *par excellence* for sculptural work was a sort of a new learning with the Mauryan court artists, and this material was quarried at Chunar. It was handled for at least a few generations and found to respond very well to the hammer and chisel of the stone-sculptor. It is only likely therefore that later sculptors would continue at least for some time to have their material imported from the same quarry until they struck at other quarries and found their stone good enough to meet their requirements. It is therefore on the arguments of conception and style that we must take our stand to argue whether they can be labelled as Mauryan or not.

The two Patna Yakshas almost identical in form and appearance, conception and treatment, dress and ornament, and now in the Indian Museum come first in the list of alleged Mauryan

1. Marshall, Chanda, Kramrisch, Coomaraswamy, Bachhofer, indeed all authorities have so far ascribed these sculptures to the Maurya period.

sculptures. It deserves consideration that both the statues have on the scarf of their shoulder a line of Brāhmī inscription that has paleographically been dated round about the beginning of the Christian era, and that helps to identify the statues as those of Yakshas. No reason is adduced why the statues should not be considered as belonging to the same period as that of the inscriptions. The so-called Mauryan polish on which the main argument for a Mauryan date rests is conspicuous only on the upper half of the bodies, which may be taken to point to the fact that the practice of Maurya court art was already on the wane. While there is nothing peculiarly Mauryan about this couple there are elements that seem to connect them with some of the sculptures on the eastern gate of the Great Stūpa at Sāñchī on the one hand and the Kushāṇa school of Mathurā on the other. The heaviness, the almost archaic stolidity and weighty volume, the conflict between fully rounded and modelled volume as seen in the arms, breast and abdomen on the one hand and flat surface at the back on the other seem to suggest a close parallel with the huge heavy and 'primitive' Boddhisattvas of the Mathurā school. The treatment of the garment when it does not cling to the body as volumes separate from the body is a particular characteristic of the Kushāṇa school of Mathurā. The same remark applies to the treatment of ornaments. Where the garment clings to the body it is treated as a wet cloth and is almost invisible except for the parallel ridges that indicate the folds. A similar treatment of the garment characterises the Didarganj Yakshī also, to be considered later. On the other hand so far as general shape and appearance of the upper part of the body and the quality and character of the modelling are concerned, a kinship with the art of the bigger reliefs on the eastern gate of the Great Stūpa at Sāñchī seems to be admissible.

Much less known than either the Patna Yakshas or the two other colossal polished sandstone standing statues from Parkham and Didarganj are the two torsos of naked Jaina images, both recovered from Lohanipur near Bankipur, Patna, and now in the Patna Museum. The larger torso, a free and round sculpture carved out of Chunar sandstone, has the high Maurya polish on it ; while the smaller one, identical in appear-

ance and style and of the same material has no polish on it. They have both been found together on the same level underground along with a silver punch-marked coin which Jayaswal says 'precedes Maurya coinage'. He ascribes the larger torso to the Maurya period and the unpolished smaller one to the 'Śūṅgan or later', on what grounds he does not state¹. If one is to go by style and appearance, both the torsos must belong to the same period which may not be far out of date from the Patna Yakshas on the one hand and the Parkham Yaksha on the other. In their tight and stiff modelling, in their fully rounded arms and thighs and in their general earthy heaviness of form they have a kinship with the Patna statues ; both pairs are characterised by a smooth and lifeless inertia, and by a comparatively flat surface treatment of their backs. The Lohanipur statues, moreover, are more primitive and archaic in outlook and appearance, heavy and a little bit unbalanced in proportion which seem to link them with the Baroda and Parkham Yakshas to be discussed later.

The same conflict in a rather accentuated form of fully rounded volume and flat surface, the same complex relation of ornaments and garments to the body, the same heaviness and archaism, rigidity and lifeless smoothness, characterise what remains of the colossal sandstone statue of a Yaksha² recovered from Baroda near Parkham and another slightly smaller but comparatively well-preserved Yaksha statue from Parkham itself (both now in the Mathurā Museum), the latter having the same polish as that on the Mauryan columns. There can be no doubt that in all these statues we have a clear expression of the weighty and imposing earthiness that traditional Indian imagination connects with its Yakshas and Yakshiṅīs, gods and goddesses of material plenty and physical welfare. The lightly bent knees and the comparatively thin legs of the standing Parkham figure have some kinship with those of the Maṇibhadra Yaksha statue from Pawaya near Gwalior³, while the

1. Jayaswal, 'Jaina Image of the Maurya Period', *J. B. O. R. S.*, XXII, pp. 130—32 and plates.

2. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian & Indonesian Art*, p. 17, fig. 15 ; Vogel, 'Mathurā School of Sculpture', *A. S. R.*, 1909—10, p. 76, Pl. XXVIII, a.

3. Bachhofer, *Early Indian Sculpture*, I, plate 62.

frank and unconditional frontality of both Baroda and Parkham statues, attaching little or no importance to the back reminds one again of primitive Bodhisattvas of the Mathurā school. Compared to the Patna Yakshas the Parkham specimen is more stiff and archaic in appearance, more rough and crude in execution ; but in the relation of ornament and dress with the body and in the quality of the flight and stiff modelling it betrays the same essential characteristics. In its upper part it shows no doubt a tendency towards flattened surface treatment, but in the lower half fully rounded and powerfully modelled mass is in full evidence giving the legs a lively form and appearance in strong contrast to the torso with a protruding and deformed abdomen that is possibly an individual characteristic. The flowing drapery which is treated as transparent where it clings to the body, and as separate though in thin and flat volumes where it is gathered together, is indicated at the front by incised wave lines as in Bhārhut and at the ends by a single rounded ridge. It seems that such treatment of drapery as we see in the Parkham image can in no way be dated earlier than Bhārhut, and similar shape and modelled form of the legs cannot be earlier than the first century B.C. In any case the Baroda and Parkham statues constitute what we may call the earliest Mathurā primitives and the initial chapter of the Mathurā school of sculpture. They have hardly anything to connect them with Mauryan sculpture of known date and locality, and are perhaps later than even the Patna Yakshas discussed above.

Artistically the Dīdarganj Yakshiṇī is the best of the series and can in no way be considered as archaic or primitive. In the easy and light stoop and forward movement of the upper part of the body helped by a slight bend of the right knee-joint, the narrow waist and full round breasts with the necklace hanging rhythmically along and between the breast-lines, the broad hips, the shapely legs gradually tapering down to the thin ankles decorated by heavy and fully jewelled ornaments, the style of doing and decorating the hair, and not the least in the sensitiveness of flesh as revealed in what remains of the modelling of the abdomen, the chin and the region round the eyes, but more fully and clearly of the back—one witnesses here per-

haps an earliest urban, conscious and sophisticated female type and form immortalised in later Indian art and literature. The fact that the treatment of its ornaments and drapery, especially of the latter, is the same as that of the Patna Yakshas is no reason why it should be labelled as primitive or considered as belonging to the same period or phase of early Indian art. The statue, plastically fully round, is bound by no 'law of frontality' and is meant to be seen from all sides—it has no primitivity whatsoever about it. Its heavy but loose mass of hair, its full soft bosoms and the firmness of the flesh at the back, and its attenuated waist with soft abdominal muscles and the broad hips at once recall the still daintier and more lively Yakshiṇīs of the Mathurā reliefs of the second century A.D. which are characterised by fully round and lively modelling of their limbs, scarfs and anklets. Indeed the Didarganj Yakshiṇī cannot be very much earlier than the latter, in spite of so-called Mauryan polish or its material which is Chunar sandstone.

These life size, plastically round statues belong thus to different aspects and phases of Indian art. They are all Indian in form and appearance ; and in style and treatment they have hardly any relation with the court art of the Mauryas. The third dimension was already mastered by the courtly Indian tradition, in the Dhauli elephant and the Rampurva bull for example, so that the conception and execution of either the Didarganj Yakshiṇī or perhaps the Patna Yakshas presented them with no new problem. Indeed they belong to the same line of evolution, but at later stages, reflecting on themselves the currents of the flowing tradition and fashions of contemporary practice. The Baroda and Parkham statues along with a seated Yakshiṇī (now in worship as Manasādevī) from Mathurā¹ on the other hand belong perhaps to a different conception and tradition altogether, a primitive folk tradition much older and more rooted to the soil, that was current and co-existent with the Maurya court art but of which the latter knew nothing. The fixation of that art in permanent materials is first to be

1. Chanda, 'Mathura School of Sculpture,' *A. S. R.* 1922—23, p. 164 ; *A. S. R.* 1920—21, Pl. XVIII. •

seen at Bhārhut and later in various other places where it slowly and steadily grappled stage by stage and with varying measure of success with the problem of the third dimension. The Baroda and Parkham statues along with others of still later date represent the different stages in that direction.

Two male heads and three small fragments of head, of the same material and similarly polished, all from Sārṇāth, have usually been assigned to the Maurya period for no other reason than that they are carved out of Chunar sandstone and have the so-called Mauryan polish on them. It is very likely as Coomaraswamy surmises on the ground of their 'extraordinary actuality' and 'marked individuality' that these are 'parts of portrait-figures, and presumably portraits of donors'. Their head-dress consisting of either a fillet with a laurel wreath or a mural crown is certainly reminiscent of Hellenistic *motifs*. Similar fragments of stone heads with identical head-dresses hail also from Bhita and Mathurā which along with the Sārṇāth examples constitute a 'well-marked stylistic group', but there is nothing to connect them definitely with Mauryan art. All that they—together with some terracotta heads and figures from Mathurā, Sārṇāth, Basarh, Bulandibagh, Kumrahar, and other places with Greek *motifs* on their head-dress and sometimes even foreign facial types—prove is that Greek *motifs* and types along with Hellenistic provincial art had migrated as far east as the Ganges valley¹. Since Hellenistic contacts were potent and effective even after the fall of the Mauryas, migration and adoption of Hellenistic art forms and *motifs* at later periods of history cannot be ruled altogether out of consideration.

A few other fragmentary reliefs have also been assigned to the Mauryan period, again without sufficient reason. Intensely lyrical and qualitatively of a very subtle significance is the figure worked in high relief out of the fragment of an arch, of a young sorrowing lady². The soft and delicate modelling of the nude upper body nowhere so sensitively rendered as in the back and the fresh young breasts, the soft linear rhythm and the composi-

1. Bachhofer, *Early Indian Sculpture*, I, pp. 12—14, plates 12 and 13 ; Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian & Indonesian Art*, pp. 19—20, figs 18, 19, 20, 22, 23. Fig. 21 of Coomaraswamy is much later still.

2. Kramrisch, *Grundzüge der Indischen Kunst*, *Indian Sculpture*, p. 12, fig. 11.

tional unity has no parallel in early Indian art. Indeed its plastic and linear expressiveness does not fit in against the background of either Maurya or Śuṅga art. The style and treatment of the hair, ornaments and garment have indeed a primitive heaviness of form but the modelling and linear composition are very much in advance. Another relief from Bhitā¹ also shows decided advance in general appearance, pose and movement, and from the character of relief composition, facial type and surface treatment it cannot be dated earlier than the reliefs of Bodhgayā and Sāñchī.

A considerable number of terracottas said to have been recovered from 'the lowest, or nearly the lowest, levels at several widely separated sites, extending from Pāṭaliputra to Taxila'² have sometimes been assigned to the Maurya period, mainly on grounds of style and appearance. Kramrisch and Gordon have drawn pointed attention to the hazards of trying to date terracottas—moulded or modelled—on ground of style or that of appearance³. Moreover, excavation methods pursued in India till very lately were not such as to make level or stratification a dependable argument for determining chronological sequence, so far as terracottas at least are concerned. Most terracotta pieces, except perhaps a few from the ancient site of Pāṭaliputra, that had originally been labelled Mauryan, are now being ascribed to the Śuṅga, Kushāṇa or early Gupta periods⁴.

VI

Cave Architecture

Of the architectural remains usually ascribed to the Maurya period very few are artistically significant. Tradition ascribes a large number of *stūpas* and *chaitya*-halls to the building activities of Aśoka, but none of them exists today in their original form and plan except the excavated *chaitya*-halls, bearing inscriptions of Aśoka and Daśaratha, in the Barābar caves. The monolithic rail at Sārnāth in grey and polished Chunar sandstone may have been erected under the direction and patronage

1. Coomaraswamy, op. cit., p. 20, fig. 13.

2. Coomaraswamy, op. cit., pp. 20—21, figs. 16, 23, 57, 60,

3. Kramrisch, *J. I. S. O. A.*, VII pp. 89-110. Gordon, *J. I. S. O. A.* XI pp. 136-95.

4. Ibid, Kramrisch.

of Aśoka himself. Its architectural form is exactly that of the rails of Bhārhut, and must have been literally transferred into stone from contemporary wooden originals without possibly any understanding of its constructional characteristics. The plinth or the *ālabana*, the uprights or the *stambhas*, the horizontal bars or the *sūchis* and the coping or the *ushṇīsha* have all been just carved out of what must have been a huge slab of stone ; an understanding of the constructional characteristics would have certainly made the task easier by piecing together the constituent parts of smaller slabs of stone exactly in the same way as we see them done at Bhārhut or Sāñchī or Bodhgayā. The altar or the *bodhimaṇḍa* at Bodhgayā is also traditionally associated with Aśoka. It is permissible to assume that it was perhaps much like the *bodhimaṇḍa* as we see it on one of the Bhārhut reliefs¹ bearing the inscription in Brāhmī characters 'Bhagavato Sakya Munino Bodho.' The point of architectural interest is that the Bhārhut altar consists of four pilasters the forms of which were evidently derived from wooden prototypes and had nothing to do with the monumental Aśoka columns.

The Barābar and Nāgārjuni caves of which the Sudāmā seems to be the earliest are lineal descendants of similar rock-hewn caves that must have been in use by peoples of rude primitive tribes and recluses. They are the earliest examples of the rock-cut method, and are exact translations in stone of existing wood and thatch structures. The exterior walls and roofs of these simple cells, including that of the Lomaśa Ṛishi cave of the same Barābar-Nāgārjuni series have all received the high polish so typical of Mauryan art. The earliest of these caves is presumably the one bearing an inscription dated in the twelfth year of Aśoka's reign—the Sudāmā—and saying that it was dedicated to the monks of the Ājīvika sect. This rock-hewn cave consists of two chambers ; a rectangular antechamber with barrel-vaulted roof and a doorway with sloping jambs—an indication of adoption of wooden prototypes—in the long side of the chamber at the end of which there is a separate circular cell with a hemispherically domed roof. The two chambers

1. Coomaraswamy, op. cit., fig. 41

are connected by a central interior doorway. At the outer side the circular cell has overhanging eaves which are but transference in wood of thatch construction ; moreover the live rock walls are marked by irregular perpendicular grooves which are but translation on live rock of upright wooden or bamboo planking¹.

Fergusson states that a second of this series of caves 'called the Karṇa Chaupār, bears an inscription which records the excavation of the cave in the nineteenth year after the coronation of Aśoka. It is simply a rectangular hall...and except in an arched roof...has no architectural feature of importance. At the right, or west end is a low platform as if for an image....'²

In the granite Nāgārjuni hill are three more caves, each bearing an inscription of the Maurya king Daśaratha that purports to dedicate them to the same Ājīvika sect. Two of these are very small, consisting of a simple rectangular cell each, each entered from the end, and having a barrel-vaulted roof. The largest is the one known locally as Gopī or Milkmaid's cave which is a long rectangular hall with a barrel-vaulted roof and with circular ends. It is entered through a doorway in the centre of the south side³.

Chronologically the latest and architecturally the best of the series is undoubtedly the Lomaśa Ṛishi⁴ which though bearing no inscription may be taken to belong to the Maurya period. In ground plan and general design it is much like the Sudāmā, and consists similarly of a rectangular antechamber with barrel-vaulted roof entered by the long side through a doorway with sloping jambs ; this antechamber is connected at the end through a central doorway with a separate cell which is oval and not round as in the Sudāmā. But the most interesting architectural element in the Lomaśa Ṛishi is its facade which is frankly an exact translation of the gable end of a wooden structure in the language of stone. The carpenter's handiwork has been copied in stone in every little detail. From this facade can easily be

1. Fergusson, *History of Indian & Eastern Architecture*, I. pp. 130—31 ; Brown, *Indian Architecture : Buddhist & Hindu*, pp. 12—13.

2. Fergusson, *op. cit.* p. 130.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 132 ; Brown, *op. cit.* p. 13.

4. Fergusson, *op. cit.* p. 131—32 ; Brown, *op. cit.* p. 13.

reconstructed the wood-built structural *chaityas* of this period¹. The finial that surmounts the gable of the facade also seems to be translated from either terracotta originals or from wooden copies of them.

These caves or rock-cut *chaityas* represent about half-a-century of building activity, but unlike Mauryan sculpture these almost primitive architectural essays show no process of evolution. From the Sudāmā to the Lomaśa Rishi there is no doubt an elaboration, but the three caves of Daśaratha do not fit in along the line of any supposed or actual evolution. Indeed these caves do not represent, except in their high polish, any conscious attempts towards architectural achievement. The architects of the Maurya court, so far as these caves are concerned, merely copied in stone what they saw before them constructed of wood and bamboo and clay. But the facade of the Lomaśa Rishi proves once for all that even here in these primitive caves there was no slipshod work permitted in the actual cutting of the stone; every little detail is sharply and precisely chiselled. Whatever their architectural quality these rock-cut chaitya halls represent the earliest extant remains of and perhaps the second stage in the evolution of this type of Indian monuments. The history of later chaitya architecture is roughly the history of the evolution of the ground plan and elevation of the Sudāmā and the Lomaśa Rishi.

VII

Concluding Remarks

With all its urban, conscious and civilised quality, its advanced power of visualisation and full knowledge and comprehension of the third dimension, Maurya court art constitutes only an interlude, in the history of Indian art. Kramrisch rightly hits the point when she says, 'in the organism of Indian art Mauryan sculpture has only marginal importance'². It was indeed a hot-house plant reared up by the will, care and patronage of a court heavily under the influence of foreign culture and ideology. In course of time the glass walls fell to pieces

1. Ibid.

2. Kramrisch, *Indian Sculpture*, p. 11—12.

and the plant withered. Maurya court art failed to make any notable permanent contribution to the growth of Indian art except that it directly helped the fixation of the latter in permanent material. A most important exponent of Maurya court ideology in sculpture are the crowning lion figures which, we have seen, were conditioned by a plastic vision and artistic convention already fixed and determined within a foreign art tradition. They raise the presumption that they for the first time introduced into the realm of Indian Art a highly advanced power of visualisation and a fuller comprehension of the problem of the third dimension. But here a counter-hypothesis, I have already pointed out, presents itself. It is quite permissible to assume that these two essential qualities of high art were not unknown to Indian artists who used to work in wood and clay and shape images in fully rounded form. This assumption seems to find strong support not only from the spirit and appearance but also from the general conception, treatment and execution of the Dhauli elephant and the Rampurva bull which undoubtedly belong to a different art tradition. I have tried also to point out that the Patna Yakshas, the Didarganj Yakshinī, and the Lohānīpur Jaina images to an extent belong to the line of evolution of this tradition, though it must be admitted that the Maurya elephant and the bull belong qualitatively to a higher aesthetic level. This court art does not seem to have taken cognisance of another tradition of art, a more primitive, perhaps folk tradition of presumably some significance, that was hardly conscious of the third dimension and fully rounded form. This tradition came to be fixed in permanent material for the first time in Bhārhut where already the conflict between round volume and flat surface makes its appearance and gradually shows itself not only in the Baroda and Parkham Yakshas and the so-called Manasādevī of Parkham still in worship but also in the Patna Yakshas, the Lohānīpur images and some of the huge primitives of the early Mathurā school.

No less important an exponent of Maurya court art is the independent column standing free in space. The idea and impetus persisted even after the Mauryas, but the form underwent considerable change. It was never adopted as part of any

larger architectural entity in which case pillars and pilasters invariably show and evolve other forms directly derivable from wooden prototypes. Already in the first century B.C. the Garuḍa column from Besnagar¹ raised by the direction and patronage of a colonial Greek converted to Bhāgavata Vaishṇavism, shows form and features that are different from those of Aśokan columns. The lowest third of the shaft is octagonal terminated by eight half-lotus designs; the middle third is hexagonal which is terminated by an octagonal band, each side of the band being decorated by a stylised full and round lotus design ; the upper third is round and is super-imposed by a bell-shaped capital that in its shape, form and appearance is related not so much with the Aśokan capitals as with the typical Persepolitan ones with a ring of pointed lotus petals at the upper end of the base. The crowning adornment is not that of an animal but consists of a high cube supporting a stylised cluster of palmyra branches which again recall similar *motifs* in West Asiatic art. The fact that this column was raised by a colonial Greek probably explains this emphasis on Achaemenian and west Asiatic *motifs*, but the fact remains that post-Maurya art and architecture discarded the type and form of columns made current by the Maurya monarchs. This is further supported by the shape and form of pilasters met with at Bhārhut and derivable from wooden prototypes.

In the realm of architecture also Maurya court art failed to make any impress. The Mauryan palaces and the Pillared Hall brought into existence directly by the impetus and inspiration of Achaemenian architectural form and ideal do not seem to have captured the imagination of Indian builders and architects, and there is no evidence in later Indian art to show that such plans and designs were ever adopted. On the other hand the few rock-hewn chaitya-cells patronised by the Maurya monarchs reveal that they were exactly and literally translated from wooden prototypes. The evidence of civil and religious architecture furnished by the early Indian reliefs of Bhārhut, Sāñchī, Amarāvati and other places also points to that conclusion².

1. Bachhofer, *op. cit.* plate, 14.

2. Fergusson, *op. cit.* chaps. IV—VI. Brown, *op. cit.* chaps. II and III ; Smith, *History of Fine Art in India & Ceylon*, pp. 21—28.

Here also the Indian style, form and tradition made themselves felt.

It is true, that early Indian art knows of certain *motifs*, patterns and designs made current and popular by Maurya court art—this without any reference to the question of art-style, and that quite a large portion of this repertory of *motifs* and designs belongs to the art of Asiatic west which was for a time dominated by Achaemenian and later by colonial Greek imperialism ; but it would be short-sightedness to assume that ‘the whole group of *motifs* of western Asiatic aspect was introduced by Aśoka’s Persian craftsmen *en bloc*’. There can hardly be any doubt that quite a few of such *motifs* were made current even before the Mauryas, while those that are definitely Hellenistic came in during and after the Maurya period.

The imperialism of the Maurya monarchs, especially of Aśoka, was a synthesis of Indian, Achaemenian and Hellenistic ideals. It was the expression of an individualistic taste and ideology, not of collective social will. Aśoka’s personal religion, his conception of Dhamma and his policy of *Dhammavijaya* also reflect the individual ideology and preference of a resolute but intelligent and benevolent autocrat who dominated the Maurya court and administration. Maurya court art also was no exception to this basic and fundamental factor. Nanda-Maurya, particularly Maurya imperialism and Aśokan policy of *Dhammavijaya* drew India out of her primitive local tribal outlook. Aśokan policy in the realm of religion raised Buddhism to the status of an international religion right from the position of a tribal and regional cult. So in the realm of art as well. Individual taste and preference of Maurya monarchs like Chandragupta, Bindusāra and Aśoka for ideas and objects from Achaemenian and Hellenistic Orient furnished the impetus and inspiration, and Indian art not only came to be fixed in permanent material but it was raised from the position of handicraft and primitive art to the dignity and status of higher art. The main lines of this art, just as the main lines of Aśoka’s policy of *Dhammavijaya* were chiefly determined by individual will, taste and preference. Both lacked deeper roots in the collective social will, taste and preference, and were therefore destined to have isolated and short lives coeval and coexistent with and within

the four limits of the powerful Maurya court. This explains why Maurya court art with all its dignified bearing, monumental appearance and civilised quality forms but a short and isolated chapter of the history of Indian art. Like the columns and the animal figures themselves Maurya Art stands aloof and apart.

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INDEX

- Abastenoë**, see *Ambashthas*, 40.
- Abhidhamma**, 215, 302.
- Abhidhānachintāmaṇi** of Hemachandra, 148.
- Abhidharmapitaka**, 284.
- Abhinavabhāratī** a commentary on the *Nāṭya Śāstra*, 329.
- Abhinavagupta**, 329.
- Ābhira**, the, a tribe, 40.
- Abhisāra**, (*Abisareś*) the territory east of the Indus, 36, 50, 51-52; the king of, assisted by the Assakenians against Alexander, 35; and *Pushkalāvati*, 36, 37; protestations of the loyalty of the *rājā* of, to Alexander, 64-65.
- Ab (h) isares**, (*Embisoros*), the king of *Abhisāra*, 37, 50, 51, 52-55, 56, 59; fight of the *Kathanians* against, 66; made satrap of his own dominions, 68, 78; two serpents kept by, 98.
- Achaemenid (s)** (*Achaemenian*), 3, 30, 32-33, 123, 260, 318; influence of the, on *Maurya* art 367-375 389, 390; over the *Mauryan Court*, 353, 359; successors of the, 34-42.
- Achaemenid empire**, 1, 31, 189, 319, 352.
- Achaemenid inscriptions**, 233.
- Achaemenian emperors**, 318, 351 and *n*.
- Adhikṛitas** same as *Grāmikas*, 22
- Adhyakshas**, Superintendents, 115, 188; the *Arthasāstra* on the duties of the, 180-181.
- Adraistai** (*Adhrshtas*, *Arishtas*), a tribe, 38; submission of the city of the, to Alexander, 66.
- Adzatathat** (*Ajātasatru*), 143.
- Aelian**, a Greek writer, 86, 97, 166; on Indian birds, 99, 100; on the *Mauryan palace* at *Pāṭali-putra*, 159; on the sons of *Chandragupta*, 160; on war chariots in India, 110; one of the *Kleitarchus'* stories preserved by, 89.
- Agalassoī**, see *Agrasrenjī*.
- Agenor**, father of *Peithon*, 74, 78.
- Agniskandhas**, 238.
- Agoranomoi**, 272, 278.
- Agrāmātya**, chief minister, 167.
- Agrammes** (*Augrasainya*, *Xandrames*) see *Mahāpadma*, 14, 16, 23, 132, 141, 142, 145.
- Agronomoi**, official of the rural administration in the *Mauryan* state, 120 and *n*; *Megasthenes* on the, 224.
- Agrasrenjī** (*Agalassoī*), the, a republican tribe in North western India, subjugation of by Alexander, 39, 70-71.
- Ahanānūru**, on the *Nandas* and the *Mauryas*, 254.
- Āhāra**, an administrative division under the *Nandas*, 22.
- Ahimsā**, 233, 237, 239.
- Ahuramazda**, 32.
- Aitareya Brāhmaṇa**, 9, 15, 188, 321, 349.
- Aindra grammar**, 328.
- Ajātasatru** (*Adzatathat*), 25, 143; father of *Udāyi*, 158, *n*; annexation of the *Vrijis* by, 19; conquest of *Kośla* by, 17.
- Ajita Keśa-Kambala**, a *Tirthika* teacher, 295.
- Ajivakas**, a community of religious men, 204, 212 215 *n*, 244, 245, • 295-96, 299, 346, 385, 386; the,

- and Bindusāra, 169; and the Mahāmātras, 225; animosity of Kauṭilya towards the, 325; in Ceylon, 257.
- Akbar**, 232.
- Akshapaṭala**, record office, 180.
- Ak (o)** phis, President of the hill state of Nysa, 35; leader of the Nysan deputation to Alexander, 48-9; visit of, to Alexander, 121.
- Alak (s) anda (kam)**, see Alexandria, 154, 199, 271.
- Alberuni**, 12.
- Alexander**, 14, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 28, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 43, 83, 90 n, 91n, 92, 93, 100, 101, 115 n, 132, 143, 151, 153 n, 172, 173, 188, 178, 233, 262, 267, 292, 305; Achaemenian hegemony extinguished by, 1, 33, 318; Agrammes, the Nanda contemporary of, 141; altars of on the Hyphases, 353; arrangements by, for the administration of the conquered territories, 149; battle of, with Porus, 57-64; behaviour of, at Persepolis, 352; Bucephalus, the charger of, 130; campaigns of, in India, 45-80, 82; capture of Aornos by, 51-55; collection of snake charmers by, 98; end of the prefect of, 139, 145; exploration and return of, to Babylon, 76-78; features of the epoch after, 197-198; gold coins of, 280; historians of, 87-89; idea of, to conquer the Prasii, 87; importance of the Indian campaign of, 2; Indian coins of, 124-126; interview of, with the sages, 105, 106; meeting of Chandragupta with, 12, 14, 24, 133, 137, 142, 144; meeting of Sophytes with, 102 n., Mousikanos the contemporary of, 45; movements of, after the battle of the Jhelum, 64-66; the period to, from Herodotus, marked by a set back in the Greek knowledge of India, 87; presents to, by the Mālavas, 267, 269, by the king of Taxila, 36, 103; prohibition of the killing of peacocks by, 100; results of the invasion of India by, 78-80, 261; the return of, 68-70; and the Sibi, 39; and Sophytes, 98; unpopularity of the Nanda contemporary of, 24; visit of Akouphis to, 121; death of, in Babylon, 78, 149.
- Alexander of Corinth (Alikasundara)**, 206, 207, 217.
- Alexander of Epirus**, 207 and n.
- 'Alexander's harbour'**, 76.
- Alexandria (Alasanda, Alakandakam)**, a city founded by Alexander 46, 199, 273; the capital of Paropanisade, 78; capital of the Yonas, 154; Clemens of, 324.
- Alexandrophagus**, devourer of of Alexander, 65 n.
- 'Alexandrum'**, 12, 144.
- Alikasundara (Alexander of Corinth)**, 206, 207, 217.
- Allahabad, Aśokan column at**, 216, 313, 361.
- Allahabad-Kosam, Pillar edicts at**, 205.
- Allitrochades**, see Bindusāra, 166, 168.
- Alor (?)**, capital of Musicanus, 74.
- Amarāvati, reliefs at**, 389.
- Amasia**, Strabo came from, 91.
- Amātyas, dharmasthiya and kanthakāśodhana courts presided over by the**, 185; highhandedness of the, during the days of Bindusāra, 167.
- Ambashthas (Ambastanoi, Abastenoc, Sambastai, Sabargae)**, a tribe, 40, 74; submission of the, to Alexander, 74.
- Āmbhi, (Omphis, Taxiles)** 132, 139, 149; sent back to his capital by Alexander, 64; put in charge of the Indian province, 77-78; Philip in charge of the satrapy of, 78; reception of Alexander by, 55-57.
- Ambigares, ruler of Harmatelia**, 41
- Amitraghata (in), Amitrokhad (t) es**, see Bindusāra, 89, 133, 166, 168, 315.
- Amitrochades**, see Bindusāra, 166, 168
- Ammon, libations to, by Alexander**, 69, 75.
- Amyntas**, 46.
- Anabasis**, a work of Arrian, 88.
- Anantadeva, author of Rajadharma-kaustubha**, 140.
- Anāthapiṇḍika, of Srāvasti**, 270.
- Andhras, (Andrae), the, a tribe**, 222, 217, 233, 321; Megasthenes on the, 43.
- Andracottu (o)s**, see Chandragupta, 23, 24, 141, 144, 151, 158
- Āngirasa**, 288.
- Animals in India**, 95-100.
- Animals, Aśoka's arrangements for the convenience of**, 238; prohibition of the slaughter of, 239.
- Animal columns, of the Aśokan pillars**, 361-362.
- Animal sacrifice, prohibition of**, 233
- Animal standard (Dhvajastambha) worship of**, 344.
- Antamahāmūtras, officers of the borders**, 226.

- Antapāla guardian of the frontier, 277, 278.
- Ant-gold, 95.
- Antialcidas, Heliodorus the ambassador of 305.
- Antigonus 151; favoured by Pithon, 150; war of Seleucus with, 137—38.
- Antigonus Gonatas of Macedonia (Antikena), 206, 207.
- Antik'ini, 217.
- Antiochus, (Soter), I of Syria, 152; 153 n, 169, 219; coins of, 129; and Bindusāra, 168—69; Demachus sent by, to the court of Bindusāra, 354; letter of Bindusāra to, 160 n; and Subhagasena, 246.
- Antiochus Theos (Antiyoka, Antiochus II) 206, 207, 217, 238; and Asoka, 354; independence of Diodotus during the time of, 130.
- Antipater, 138; fight of Eumenes against, 150; regent of Macedonia, 149.
- Anurādhapura, capital of Ceylon 256, 257.
- Anusamyāna, tours of inspection, 227
- Anulā, queen of Devānāmpriya Tissa, of Ceylon, 218—219, 258.
- Aornos, capture of, by Alexander, 51-55; Saśigupta at, 65.
- Apadānas, the 164.
- Aparānta, textile manufacture in, 262
- Āpastamba, 293, 333, 335.
- Āpastamba Dharma sūtra, 333, 334.
- Apes, method of the capture of, 96-97
- Aphamiotai, 111.
- Appian, 137, 138, 139, 154, 158, 169; on the relations between Seleucus and Chandragupta, 151; on the residence of Chandragupta, 158 n; the *Syriake* of, 135.
- Arabia, 95.
- Arachosia (Kandahar), 33, 75, 153; given by Seleucus I to Chandragupta Maurya, 130; Sybyrtius the Satrap of, 89.
- Arachosians, colonisation of Rambakia with the, 77.
- Arachoti, 152.
- Aramaic inscription, 355.
- Aramaic script, 323, 352.
- Aranyakas, the 308.
- Arāshṭras (Āraṣṭas) Republics, 68, 337.
- Arbela, battle of, 318.
- Architecture, 339-340.
- Ardhamāgadhi dialect, 317, 347.
- Aria, 153; given by Seleucus I to Chandragupta Maurya, 130.
- Ariana, 91 n, satrapy of, 154.
- Arigaon, a city burnt and deserted by its residents, 48.
- Aristobulus, a follower of Alexander, 88; on the changes in the course of rivers, 93—94; on the customs at Taxila, 103; on the difference between the sanyāsins and the vānaprasthas 105; on the fertility of the soil and crops, 94; on the Indian sages, 104; on the law relating to discovery of deadly substance, 95; on the products of South India, 43; on rain and monsoon, in North-west India, 92-3; on the snake, 98; on the size and shade of a tree, 94.
- Aristotle, on Keras, 43; Scylax cited by, 83.
- Aristoxenus, on the visit of Indian philosopher to Athens, 81
- Ariṣṭha, a nephew of Devanāmpriya Tissa, 218.
- Āriunaka, Arjuna cult, 304—5.
- Arrian, 32, 36, 37, 41, 48, 58, 72, 74, 97, 99, 102n, 135, 139, 156, 157, 278; extracts from the memoirs of Nearchus in the works of, 88; on Alexander's invasion, 40; on Alexander's march to Pura, 77; on Alexander's interview with the sages, 104; on Aornos, 52-3; on the army of Porus, 57; on the division of the conquests of Alexander, 78; on the extent of the empire of Cyrus in the east, 30; on the equipment of the Indian foot soldier, 269; on Herakles, 101; on the husbandmen in India, 114; on the Indians, 101—102; on Indian rivers, 93; on Indian towns 357; on ivory works in India, 265; on the invasion of India by foreigners, 31; on leather works in India, 266; on the life of elephants, 96; on the location of the country of Sambhūti, 69; on the losses of the Indians and the Greeks in the battle of the Jhelum, 62; on the Mālavas, 39; on Megasthenes and Porus, 89—90 n; on the nomarchai, 39; on the Pāṇḍyan queen, 44; on the period between Dionysus and Sandrakottos, 101; on the position of the ruler of Takshasila, 36; on the ruler of Abhisāra, 37; on slavery in India, 111—112; on the sophists, 116; on the submission of the Kshudrakas to Alexander, 73; on the system of government beyond the Beas, 21.
- Arsakes, ruler of Uraśa, 36; placed under Abhisares, 68.
- Art in India, common elements between the, and foreign art, 351.
- Artaxerxes Mnemon, Ctesias, a physician in the court of, 86.

- Arthasāstra*, the 3, 112, 113, 115 116 164, 179, 181, 226, 228; the, a work on polity, 336—37; assigned to the age of Chandragupta Maurya, 12; authenticity of the, 172; the basis of the, 189—190; character of the, 178, 198; excurses on the, 190—201; value of the, 135; mantriparishad in the, 227; omission in the, of Kauṭilya's part in the Mauryan revolution, 146; reference in the, to Udyana's story, 330 n; *Tantrayuktis* borrowed from the by the *Tolkāppiyam*, 192; on the duties of the *adhyakshas*, 180—181; on *Ānvikshiki*, 335; on architecture, 339—340; on arts, 332; on ascetics, 335; on the Chakravartikshetram, 172; on city administration, 121; on different types of chariots, 188; on different types of infantry, 188; on the encouragement of industry and trade by the state, 275—79; on the expenditure of the government, 184; on foreign policy, 187—188; on the ideal of good government, 190; on the king's ownership of land, 177; on skin 265—66; on metallic ores, 266, 267; on the *nāvadhyaaksha*, 189; on *pāndyakavāta*, 252; on pearl necklace, 268; on popular lores, 338—339; on the *rajju*, 224; on republic, 173; on royal power, 175; on the safety of the king's person, 176; on slaves, 275; on *Tantrayuktis*, 336; on trade, 270—71; on textile manufacture, 262—264; on the training of war horses and elephants, 122; on the units of currency, 279, 280; on the validity of royal decree, 174; on the Veda, 333; on the watchwords of the Mauryan government 360; on the worship of Sam karshaṇa, 306.
- Artisan, the 278; punishment for offences against, 279.
- Āryamañjusīmūlakalpa*, the, on Pāṇini, 326; on the patronage of the Brahman Tārkikas by the Nandas, 324.
- Āryan India, division of into three parts, 310.
- Āryan speech, changes in the, 311—312; taken out of India, 318—319. spread of, 309.
- Ā (r) yaput (r) a, a title of the viceroy of Suvarṇagiri, 223.
- Āryāūra, author of the *Jātakamāla*, 196.
- Āshādhasena, 298.
- Āsm (v) aka, (Aspasiens, Hippasioi, Hypassioi), a tribe in North western India, 26, 34, 47, 321; conquest of, by Alexander, 48; exterminated by Mahāpadma, 17, 18; an Āryan state, 321.
- Asōka (Chandāsōka, Kālāsōka, Kāmāsōka, Dharmāsōka, Piadamsana, Piyadassana, Piyadasi, Asōkavardhana, Devānāmpriya), 1, 11, 100, 108, 140, 162, 164, 165n, 167, 168, 176, 181, 182, 187, 192, 199, 202, 207, 208, 239, 241, 249, 298, 299, 301, 347, 355, 360; put to school under Pingala Nāga, 331, early life of, 208—10 and n; succession of, to the throne, 4, 170; administration under, 178, 223—226, 228—229; adoption of Buddhism by, 210—212, 303; and the Ājivakas, 169, 296, 299, 346; and the Buddhist *Saṅgha*, 169, 214—216, 285, 301, 302—304; and Devānāmpriya Tissa 258; and the fall of the Mauryan empire, 247; and the Nirgranthas, 299; and the southern kingdoms, 250; art during the time of, 245; building activities of, 384, 385; chronology of the reign of, 206—207; conquest of Kalinga by, 272, 309; a contemporary of Magas of Cyrene, 138; currency system during the days of, 282; date of the XIII Rock Edict of, 138; the Dhammavijaya of, 360; extent of the empire of, in the south 155—156, 203—204; 219—223; imperialism of, 390; inscriptions of, 3, 20, 171, 173, 200, 204—206; language of the inscriptions of, 312—319 341; military success of, 261; missions of, 171, 216—219, 273, 274, 318, 354; model for the inscriptions of, 359; north—western tribes under, 154; oral orders of, 226—227; patronage of Brahmanical learning by, 324; patronage of Dhamma by, 303; pilgrimage of 212—213, 221; the policy of Dharmanusasti of, 22; possible additions of, to Pātāliputra, 346; propaganda of, in the Hellenistic kingdoms, 273; race of, 141 and 142n; religious policy of, 229—234; remission of taxes by, in favour of Lumbini, 184; restoration of order by, in Taxila, 167; rule of, a great epoch, 3—4; sculpture under, 265; silence of Greek and Latin writers about, 168; sources for the reign of, 202—207 stone pillars of, 192, 265, 358, 361—69; traditions about, 214—215n; on the Pāshaṇḍas, 306; on the performance of *mangalas*, 306; weak successors of, 190, 243—248.
- Asōkārāma, 215.

Aśokāvādāna, the 167; Chandragupta ignored in the, 134.
Aśokavardhana, see *Aśoka*, 207.
Aśokavardhanāvādāna, 243.
Aśokavarma, mentioned as a ruler of Kāñchī, 249.
Aśokeśvara, 219.
 Assasians, see *Aśmaka*, 34, 47.
 Assagetes (*Aśvajit*?) a chieftain that helped Alexander, 51.
 Assakenians, a tribe in North-Western India, 34, 35, 47; attempt of the, to expel the Macedonians from N. W. India, 150.
 Assakenoi, a tribe in North Western India, 51; subjugation of the, by Alexander, 49—50; rebellion and subjugation of the, 65.
 Assakenus, 15 n, 36.
 Assam, and *Aśoka*, 221—222.
 Assyria, 344.
Aśādhyāyi, the, 284.
 Astes, a chief in the Pushkalāvati region, death of, 47.
 Astomi, 163.
 Astynomoi, officers in charge of the city, 120—121 and 120 n, 278.
Aśvaghosha, 196, 318.
Aśvamedha, a sacrifice, 171, 289.
 Athena, figure of the helmeted head of, on a coin, 127.
Aśvavāmitra, 298, 299.
 Athenaeus, a Greek writer, 134, 139, 168.
 Athens, coins of, 128, 129; visit of an Indian philosopher to, 81.
 Attalus, a general under Alexander, 59.
 Aṭṭhaka (*Aṣṭaka*) a Vedic Ṛṣhi, 287.
Atharvaveda, the, 262, 333.
 Audumbara (Kotumbara), 263.
 Augrasainya (*Agrammes*), son or descendant of *Ugrasena*, 14.
 Augustus, 134.
 Austric speech, 308, 319, 320.
Āvayakasūtra, the, 298.
 Avanti, 300.
Avantisundari, 330.
Avadānakalpalat the, of *Kshemendra*, 132n; mention of *Aśoka* in the 141.
 Avanti, (*Malwā*) 136; and the *Śaiśunāgas*, 18; control of Chandragupta over, 155.
 Avantis the, see *Pradyotas*, 19.
Avadānas, 203; the, on the oppression in the provinces, 182; on the successors of *Aśoka*, 243—44.
 Awadhi, Eastern Hindi 317.
 Ayodhyā, the camp of Nanda in, 17, 21.
Āyuktikas, officers, 227.

B

Babylon, (*Baveru*), 270; death of Alexander at, 78, 149; exploration of, and return of Alexander to, 76-78; Harpalus, satrap of 69; Herodotus on the Persian Governor of, 85-6; partition of, 139; Seleucus in, 151.
 Babylonia, 344; Alexander's mint at, 125, 126.
 Bactria, 33; conquest of, by Alexander, 46; revolt of, from Syria, 2.
 Bactrian Greeks 85; allegiance of the, to Seleucus I, 130.
 Bādāmi, the Chaluyas of, 248.
 Bādarāyaṇa, author of the *Vedāntasūtras*, 335.
 Bahmanabad, 41.
 Bāhrikas (troupes of performers), 179.
 Bairāt, Minor Rock Edicts at, 204. 211-212.
 Bāhrikas, 146.
 Balissaha, a disciple of Mahāgiri, foundation of the Uttarabalissahagaṇa by, 298.
 Balkh, 46.
 Bāṇa 196, 208n; on Pushyamitra's execution of Bṛhadratha, 189, 246; reference to the *Vāyu purāṇa* by, 23.
 Bandhupālita (*Samprati*?) 244, 245.
 Bankipur, 379.
 Barabar caves, 265, 313, 384, 385; inscription of *Aśoka* in the, 204, 205.
 Baroda, Yaksha image from, 380, 381, 383.
 Basarh, 383.
 Basarh—Bakhira, *Aśokan* column at, 361, 362, 374, 377; lion figure in the column at, 369—70.
 Basileus, king, 34, 36, 37, 38.
Bauddha Pārvaṭīya vamsāvalī, 147n.
 Baudhāyana, 164n, 333; on the *Āśramas* 335—336; on the *vānaprastha*, 334.
Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra, 321.
Baudhāyana śrauta sūtras, 349—50.
 Baveru (*Babylon*), 270.
 Bazira (*Bir—kot*) subjugation of, by Alexander, 50—51.
 Bear, constellation of the, 92.
 Beards, dyeing of the, in India, 102 and n.
 Behistun insc. of Darius, 359.
 Benares, see *Kāśī*, 17, 269, 271, 313.
 Bengal and *Aśoka*, 221—222.
 Bersaentes, Satrap of Arachosia, 33.
 Besnagar, *Garuḍa* column from, 389; inscription, 305.
 Bessus, the satrap of Bactria, 33.

- Bhābrā edict, (Calcutta Bairat), rock ins. 204, 285.
- Bhadrabāhu, a Jaina patriarch, 161—162 and 161*n*, 165 249; migration of to Mysore, 297. 299, 341; return of to Magadha, 298; *Kalpasūtra* of 142 *n*.
- Bhaddāsāla, a general of the Nandas, 15, 25, 146; conquest of, by Chandragupta, 136.
- Bhadresvara author of the *Kahavali*, 136.
- Bhagala, designation of a royal race of Kshatriyas, 38.
- Bhagala, a chieftain near the Beas, 67.
- Bhāgavata purāṇa*, 141.
- Bhagu, a Vedic Ṛshi, 287.
- Bhandarkar, D. R. on the identification of Satiyaputa. 238*n*; on the identification of Sophytes, 126 *n*.
- Bharadvāja, a Vedic Ṛshi, 288, 328.
- Bharata, a legendary hero, 171.
- Bharata, author of the *Nātyasāstra*, 318, 331.
- B (h) arhut, reliefs at, 375, 385, 389.
- Bhartihari, author of the *Vākya-padiya*, 327, 328.
- Bharukachchha, 270.
- Bhattiprolu, inscription at, 252.
- Bhavishyanukirtana* the, 19.
- Bhita relief, 383, 384; terracotta reliefs from, 343.
- Bhimaratha, 330.
- Bhir mound, Takshaśila represented by the, 35.
- Bhishma, 251.
- Bhoja, author of the *Śringāra prakāśa*, 328, 330.
- Bhojas, a tribe, 217, 222.
- Bhojapuri dialect, 317.
- Bijjala, 15.
- Bimbisāra, 11, 25, 22, 15; father of Ajātaśatru, 17.
- Bindusāra (Amitrochades, Amitrachates, Allitrochades, Amitrakhāda, Amitraghāta), 4, 133, 134, 165, 168, 176, 210, 272, 330, 331, 346, 390; Durdharā, mother of, in Jain tradition, 159; *m*. the daughter of Seleucus (?) 208, 209—accession of, 206; and the Ājiva(i)kas, 169; and the Deccan, 168; Brahmanic learning under, 324; Council of five hundred under, 167 *n*; embassy of Deimachus to the court of, from Seleucus. 89, 354; foreign relation of, 168—69; illness of, 209; last years of, 169—179; mentioned in the *Asokavadāna*, 134; mentioned in Patañjali's *Mahābhāshya*, 133; military success of, 261; reign period of, 138; request of to Antiochus Soter, 160, *n*; Subandhu a minister of, 329.
- Bismarck, 200.
- Bodhan, 18.
- Bodh Gayā, 241, 375, 384; Bodhimāṇḍa at 436, 385.
- Bodhisattvas of the Mathura school, 379, 381.
- Bodhimāṇḍa, 385.
- B (o)ucephala, a city founded by Alexander on the bank of the R. Jhelum, 64. 130.
- Brachmanes (Brahmana), 315.
- Brahmagiri, 223, 249, M. R. E. at, 204.
- Brahmanas, attempt of the, to expel the Macedonians from N. W. India, 150; influence of the 40.
- Brāhmaṇa—mahāśālas, 288—289.
- Brahmavādins, 335.
- Brāhmī inscription, 220, 22, 249, 250, 253—53, 258, 309, 312, 321, 379.
- Brahmi script, 205, 256, 385; derivation of the 323—324.
- Brahmanism in the Nanda Maurya period, 284, 287—293.
- Brajbhākhā, 317.
- Brihadratha, 244, 246; execution of, 189.
- Brhātkathā*, the 20, 25, 134, 147, 325; on the origin of the Mauryas, 141, 142; on Pāṇini and Vararuchi, 326, 329.
- Brhātkathakośa*, Harishena the author of, 329.
- Brhaspati, 244.
- Brhaspatimitra, 283 *n*.
- Breloer, 112 *n*, 113, 115 and *n*, 117*n*, 191; on the *Arthasāstra*, 196.
- Buddha (Boutta, Śākyamuni), 35, 141, 211, 213, 214*n*, 215, 231, 260, 284, 294, 295, 308, 309, 311, 313, 317, 321, 324, 325, and Ceylon, 256; and the name Vrishala, 140; *nrvāṇa* of the 206, 299; the religion of the 3; Vijayasimha, a contemporary of, 44; on true Brahmins, 292.
- Buddha era, 207.
- Buddhism, 284, and Asoka, 210—212, 230—34; conversion of Ceylon to 209; Kauṭilya's animosity towards 324; monuments of, in South India, 452; in the Nanda—Maurya period, 299—304; and Sanskrit, 325, 326; spread of, in foreign countries, 304.
- Buddhist canon, 285, 286.
- Buddhist literature, the 340—41; Indian inland trade 269—70; on the Vedas, 289.

- Buddhist Sangha. 204; second and third councils of the, 214-16; 299; 300-302; and Aśoka, 169
 Buddhists and Chandragupta. 165.
 Buddhist symbols, worship of 343-344.
 Buhler, 164, 200; on the Rājukas, 224
 Bulandibagh, 357, 383.
- C
- Calcutta Bairat rock ins., (Bhabra edict), 204, 268, 341.
 Callimachus, 138.
 Callisthenes, 144.
 Cambyes, 315.
 Canki, 289.
 Cape Malan, 77.
 Carians, 33.
 Carmania, 273.
 Caryanda, Skylax of, 82.
 Cathacans, (Kathaioi) a self-governing tribe, 37; country of the, 38.
 Cave architecture in the Mauryan period, 384-87.
 Ceylon, (Ila, Laṅkā, Tambapanni, Taprobane), 43, 250, 253, 257, 270, 271; Aśoka's letter to the king of, 243; Aśoka's mission to, 218; conversion of, to Buddhism, 209; early history of, 256-259; elephants of, 95; fragrant wood in, 266; and Mahinda, 258; Megasthenes on, 250, 256; Pāli canon taken by Mahendra to, 317, 138; production of gold in, 95; vaguely known to Onesicritus, 92.
 Ceylonese, commentary on the Great chronicle of, on the last Nanda, 24; legends on the early life of Aśoka, 209 n; chronicles, 22, 134, 135, 146; on the third Buddhist council, 301-2.
 Chabahil, vihāra built by Chārumati 221.
 Chakravāla emperors, 253.
 Chakravartin, 10, 156, 255; ideal of the, 132, 172.
 Chakravartikshetram, the *Arthasāstra* on the, 172, 191.
 Chalcolithic civilization, relics of the, 342.
 Chālukyās of Bādāmi and the Mauryas of Konkan, 248.
 Champā, 208, 269, 270, 308.
 Chāṇakya, see Kauṭilya, 1, 146, 148, 164, 166, 167, 324, 325, 330, 337; an inhabitant of Taxila, 25; legends about, 2-3.
 Chandakaṣika the, 143.
 Chāṇḍāla language, 308.
 Chandanāgari, a śākhā of the Uttara-balissahagaṇa, 298.
 Chāṇḍasa speech, 316.
 Chanda—Siri, (Chandraśrī), see Chandragupta, 139.
 Chāṇḍāśoka, 301.
 Chandrabhāgā (Sandraphagos), 65, 315.
 Chandrag(k)upta (Sandrakoptas Sandrac (k) ottus, Andrakottos, Piyadassana, Chandagupta, Chandairi, Piadamsana, Vrshla, Xandrammes) 1, 4, 12, 14, 22, 23, 89, 90, 101, 132, 139, 140, 152, 155, 165, 165, 168, 175, 176, 182, 206, 208, 223, 243, 315, 358, 390; accession of, 166, 206; achievement of Indian freedom by 139; ancestry of, 140-42; and Bhadrabāhu, 299; Brahmanic learning under, 324; building of pātaliputra and the palace by, 345, 346; chronology of 136-39; 207n; civil administration under, 157-158; conquest of Bhadrāsāla by, 156; conquest of North West India by, 149-154; 261; consorts of, 159-160; and contemporary religions, 164-65; control of, over western India, 20; defeat of Seleucus by, 130, 156, 159, 169, 273, 353-354; early career of 142-44; extent of the empire of, 155-156; 352; hostility of, to non-monarchical states, 173; influence of Alexander's invasion of India, on the career of, 79; Jain traditions about the abdication of, 165; Justin on the oppression of, 148; Kauṭilya Chance llor of, 191; language of, 313; legends about, 23; private life of 160, 162; literary interest of the period of, 163-64; Malwa and Gujarat, parts of the empire of, 18; Mauryan revolution by, 24-25; meeting of, with Alexander, 12, 14, 137, 142, 144; Megasthenes sent by Seleucus as ambassador to the court of, 89; and the Mysore territory, 155, 249, 341; and the N. W. route, 271-2; origin of, 139, 142 and n; palace of, 188; personal gifts of, 163; Plutarch on, 141; political organisation of, and foreign models, 173-74; residence of, 158 and n; Rostovtzeff on, 198; *sabhā* of, 160-61; sources for the reign of, 133-135; strength of the army of, 188; Subandhu, a minister of, 329; theft in the camp of, 117; uprooting of the Nandas by, 145-146; war of with the prefects of Alexander, 145.

- Chandragupta-kathā* the, 13, 133, 135, 143, 145.
- Chandragupta sabhā*, referred to in the *Mahābhāshya*, 133, 160.
- Charakasamhitā*, the 194.
- Chariot, the, in Indian warfare, 110.
- Charpentier, on the *Arthasāstra* and the epics, 195.
- Chārumati, *d.* of Aśoka, 221.
- Chatterji, Charan Das, on ancient Indian coins 281 *n.*
- Chera (Kerala, Keras), 43, 251.
- Chetas, the, of Kalinga, 246-247.
- China, connection of India with, 319.
- Chinese pilgrims value of the writings of the, 82.
- Chitaldroog, Aśoka's inscription in the district of, 202.
- Cho(d)las, the, 43-44; 217, 238, 250, 251; state of the, outside Aśoka's empire, 219
- Chora-rajju*, a source of revenue, 224.
- Chorarajjuka*, rural officer, 224.
- Cinabhūmi, 193.
- Cinnamon, production of, in India, 95.
- Classical Sanskrit, emergence of 316.
- Classical writers, reference to Chandragupta by the, 137-39.
- Cleisobora (Krishnāpura?), 101, 305.
- Cleitus, 144.
- Clemens of Alexandria, on Buddhist philosophers, 324.
- Clitarchus, 162.
- Coins:— Bajaur Hoard of coins, 283 *n.*; Dacic, a persian gold coin, 123, 124; Dharaṇa (purāṇa) a silver punch marked coin, 127, 258, 279, 280; diobol, a Greek coin, 129; didrachm, a Greek coin, 128; drachma, a Greek coin, 117, 128, 129; gaṇḍaka, 283; gold coins of Alexander, 280; gold coins of Philip Arrhidaeus, 280; Karsha, 281*n.*; 319; Karshapaṇa (Kahāpaṇa) a silver or copper coin, 279, 280, 281, 319; māshaka, a token coin, 279; nishaka, 279; paṇa, a silver coin, 279; punch marked coins, 123, 123ⁿ 280, 281, satamāna, 279, 281; signatum argentum, 282, Siglori, a Persian silver coin, 123 124; S ophytes coins 126, 127, 129; suvarṇa 279; Taxila Hoard of coin, 280, *n.*, and 281; Tetradrachm, a Greek silver coin, 125 and *n.*, 128; under the Nandas and the Mauryas, 279-283.
- Columbus, 80.
- 'Companions', the, of Alexander, 57, 59, 62, 63.
- Coniaci, (Kumārikā), Eratosthenes on, 43, 44.
- Constantinople, Photius, a patriarch of, 86.
- Coomaraswamy, on Indian art, 351
- Coral trade, 199.
- Courtezans, employment of the, 337
- Craterus, a general under Alexander, 48, 52, 59, 61, 64, 69, 70, 74, 75, 78, 80.
- Crime and punishment in India, according to the Greek writers, 117.
- Cunningham on Alasanda, 154.
- Curtius Rufus, Q. 47, 48, 305; on the Agalassoi, 39; on Alexander's subjugation of Massaga, 50; on the Ambashthas, 40; on the army of the Mālavas and the Oxydrakai, 39; on Chandragupta and his palace, 118-119. *n.*; on the colonisation of Rambakia, 77; description of Sophytes by, 102 *n.*; on the dress of the Indians, 109 *n.*; on the father of Mahāpadma, 14; on the image of Heracles carried by Porus, 307; on the impeachment of Alexander by his friends for his rashness, 73; on the kingdom of Saubhūti, 37; on marriages in India, 102; on the number of chariots, under the Nandas, 188; on the presents to Alexander by the king of Taxila, 282; on the Proshthas, 41; on the reception to Alexander at Takshaśila, 56; on the submission of the Kshudrakas to Alexander, 73; on the submission of Saubhūti to Alexander, 69.
- Ctesias, book of, on India, 86-7, 92.
- Cyropaedia*, a work of Xenophon, 12.
- Cyrus, 76, 351 *n.*; Achaemenian emperor, conquests of, in the east, 30-31.

D

- Daimachus, Hellenic envoy, 135.
- Dakshinārnava*, southern ocean, 156.
- Dames, on the Sattagydiens, 31.
- Damila, 322.
- Damir*, 322.
- Damirike (Damiz, Damizakam), 43, 322.
- Daṇḍa*, a measure, 271.
- Dandamis, (Mandanis), 106.
- Daṇḍadhara*, king, 175.
- Daṇḍin, 191, 196, 200.
- Daṇḍopanasāmantas, 34.
- Dantak(p)ura (Dantavakra) capital of the Kalingas, 18.
- Dardic Khasa speech, 315-16.
- Darius I, Scylax sent to India by, 82.
- Darius (Hystapes), Achaemenian emperor 30, 350, 351, 352, 353,

- 357, 358; Behistun inscription of, 359, chronology of the inscriptions of, 200; *daric* coins of, 123; empire of in India, 31-32; overthrow of, by Alexander 318; tribute to, from the Indians, 84.
- Darius III, 33.
- Daśaratha, gift of caves by, to the Ājivakas, 169, 244-45, 283*n*; 296, 346; epigraphic records of, 134.
- Dasar, 112.
- Daśona, 244.
- Dāsikharbatika, a śākha of the Godāsa gaṇa, 298.
- Dattaka, codification of the court-zan's art by, 337.
- Decourdemanche, on the origin of the punch—marked coins, 123*n*.
- Deimachu(o)s, sent on an embassy to Pāṭaliputra by Seleucus, 89, 168, 354.
- Deinon, father of Kleitarchus, 89.
- Delhi-Mirath, Aśokan column of, 205, 361.
- Demetrius, 198; coins of, 130.
- Deopatan, city founded by Devapāla, 221.
- Derdai (Daradas, mod. Dards), Megasthenes on, 85.
- Devadharman, 244, 283*n*.
- Devanāmp(r)iya, an epithet of Aśoka, 140, 175, 208, 217, 218, 233, 235, 238, 354, 359.
- Devanāmpiya Tissa, king of Ceylon, 257; and Aśoka, 218, 258.
- Devapāla, *m.* Chārumati, 221.
- Devī, wife of Aśoka, 209.
- Dhammapada*, the, and the ethical ideas in Aśoka's edicts, 230.
- Dhamma-paliyāya (Dharmaparyāya) 285.
- Dhammā, principal queen of Bindusāra, 167.
- Dhana Nanda, the last prince of the Nanda dynasty, 23.
- Dha(r)mma 169, 171, 211, 212, 250; standard of equity, 174; content and propagation of, 233-243; seven expositions of, 285-86; elaboration of, in the P. E. 213-214; propagation of, by Aśoka, 187, 232, 303; propagation by the *Rājukas*, 225.
- Dhammaguṇa, moral virtues, 234.
- Dhammaniyama, 240.
- Dharma courts, 185, 186.
- Dharmaguptaka, Buddhist school, 303.
- Dharmamahāmātras*, 22, 225.
- Dharmānusasti, policy of, 22.
- Dharmaśoka, see Aśoka 165, 301.
- Dharmastambhas*, 362.
- Dharmasthiya*, 185.
- Dharasūtras*, the, 333, 334.
- Dha (r) mmavijaya, conquest by law, 3, 229 and *n.* 303; basis of, 390; nature of the, 360; in W. countries, 354.
- Dharmayātras, 241.
- Dhavala, 248.
- Dhauri (Tosali), 203, 204, 205, 313; 362, a centre of provl. admn. 223, 225; elephant carving at, 346, 369, 370, 371, 376, 377, 382, 388.
- Dhūṇḍirāja, a commentator, 134, 140.
- Didarganj (g) Yakshini image, 379, 380, 381, 382, 388.
- Digambaras, 286.
- Diodorus Siculus, Greek author, 14, 41, 91, and *n.*, 103, 111, 135, 147, 168, 278; on the Ambashthas, 40; on Alexander's capture of Massaga, 50; on the army of the Mālavas and the Oxydrakai. 39-40; on the foundation of Pāṭaliputra. 158 *n.*, on Gangaridae and Prasii, 16; on Hermetelia, 41; on the husbandmen in India, 114, 115; on India's agricultural and mineral resources, 261-62; on Indian metal works, 267; on the kingdom of Saubhūti, 37-8; on marriage and occupation rules in India, 102, 116; mention of Xandrames by, 23; on the number of chariots, under the Nandas, 188; on Porus, the Elder, 37; on the reason for the practice of *satī* 103; on the strength of the Nanda army, 16; on Tauala, 41.
- Diodotus, I, independence of, during the time of Antiochus Theos, 130.
- Diodotus II, coins of, 130, 280.
- Diogenes, Cynic philosopher, 106; Onesicritus a follower of, 88.
- Dionysius, envoy from Philadelphus (Ptolemy II), 89, 135, 168.
- Dionysus, 31, 39; supposed founder of Nysa, 48; legends about, 100, 101; worship of, 106, 306.
- Dīpavamśa*, the, 203, 206, 208; on Aśoka's religious quest; 210; on the third Buddhist council, 214-216.
- Dipi*, 233.
- District administration under the Mauryas, 181.
- Divyāvadāna*, the, 23, 168, 171, 246, 247, 331; on Aśoka's accession, 209*n*; on Aśoka's adoption of Buddhism, 210; on Aśoka's pilgrimage 213 and *n*; on the mother of Aśoka, 208; on the Nirgrantha religion in Bengal, 299; on Pushyamitra, 246; on the revolt in Taxila, 167;

on Samp(r)a(t)di, 245; on the successors of Aśoka, 244.
 'Dotted Record' of the Chinese, 206
 Dr (a)mil (z), 321.
 Draviḍa, see (Tamilakam), 43; origin of the word, 321
 Dravidian language, growth of the, 320-22.
 Dravidian speech, 308.
 Droṇa, 251.
 Dundubhi(s) sara, a missionary, 216, 217.
 Durdharā, mother of Bindusāra, 159, 165.
 Duṣṭhāmātyāh, wicked officials, 167
 Dyrta, a city in North-western India, 55.

E

Eastern Prakrit, vehicle of religious culture, 316, 317.
 Eç(k)batana, 30, 159, 357, 358.
 Egypt, notions about the State in, 197; trade of India with, 273.
Ekaçchhatra, 21.
Ekrāt, 10, 11, 21, 156; Mahāpadma an, 16.
 Elephant, the, in Indian warfare, 110; Greek writers on the, 95-96.
 Elephant device on Greek coins, 129, 130.
 Embisaros (Abisares), Abhisāra, king of, 37.
 Embolima (Amb), a city in North-western India, 52.
 Enotokoitai, the, 163.
 Epics, the, and the *Arthasāstra*, 195.
 Episkopoi, 160.
 Eratosthenes, President of the Alexandrian library, 33; description of India by, 43; on rains in N.W. India, 92-93; on the size of India, 91-92.
 Eronnaboas (Hiraṇyavāha), 315.
 E:thiopia, 95.
 Eucratides, coins of, 130, 131.
 Eudemo(u)s, 139, 147, 151; and Porus, 149, 150; continuance of, in India, 79; put in charge of the Indian province, 77-78.
 Eudoxus of Cyzicus, 273 n.
 Euergetes II, king of Egypt, 273 n.
 Eumenes, 103, 151; fight of against Antipater, 150.
 Eurymedon, Persian defeat at, 32.
 Euthydemus, I dispossession of Diodotus II by, 130; coins of the house of, 131.

F

Foreign ideas, influence of, in the *Arthasāstra*, 198.

Foreign models, in the administration of justice, 186.
 Forts, F. W. Thomas on, 189.

G

Gaṇanā, Accounts Department, 226.
 Gaṇapātha, 199.
 Gandhāra, (K'ien-t'-10) 30, 220, 308, 310; kingdom of, 35-36 Kaspapyros, a city in, 83; merchants from, 269; oppression in, by wicked ministers, 182; people in the army of Xerxes, 32; Pushkalavati, the capital of, 51; Virasena's rule in, 246; wollen goods from, 263.
 Gandhāra art 323.
 Gandhāras (Gandharians), 225; one in the seventh satrapy, 30-31; a tribe in North-west India under Aśoka, 154, 222, 223.
 Ganga, author of a schism among the Nirgranthas, 298.
 Gangaridae(i) (Gandaritai, Gandaridai) 12, 21, 96n, 350.
 Garuḍa the *vāhana* of Vishṇu, 344
 Ganikādhyaksha, see strīadhyaksha mahāmātras, 226, 337.
Gargi Samhitā 245.
 Garuḍa column from Besnagar, 389.
 Gāthās, the, 164.
 Gaugamela, battle of, 318; Indian contingents at, 33, 34.
 Gaur (a) (e)ians, the, a tribe in North-Western India, 34, 47, 49.
 Gautama, the Buddha, 10, 11.
 Gautama, 274, 293, 333.
 Gautama, grammar of, 328.
 Gautamiputra, a devotee of Vāsudeva, 305.
 Gāvimath, Minor Rock Edict at, 204.
 Gayā (Sambodhi), 211.
 Gaza, battle of, 150.
 Geiger, or Alasanda, 154.
 Gedrosia (Gedroseni, Southern, Mekran), 76, 77, 80, 152, 153, 273; given by Seleucus to Chandragupta Maurya, 130.
Geography the, a work of Hecataeus of Miletus, 83.
Geography, the, of Strabo, 91n.
 Ghasundi inscription, 305.
 Ghoshal U. N. 114n, 178n.
 Girivraja-Rājagriha, old Magadhan capital, 11, 17.
 Girnar, 20, 313, 314; Aśoka's inscription at, 203, 204, 205; inscription of Rudradāman at, 171, 182, 192, 199, 208.

- Glauchukayanas (Glausai, Glauganikai), a tribe subjugated by Alexander, 64.
- Glauganikai, see Glauchukayanas, 38, 64.
- Go-adhykhas*, see *Vachabhūmikas*, 228.
- Godāsa, a disciple of Bhadrabāhu, foundation of the Godāsagana by, 298.
- Gold, Herdotus on the supply of, 85
- Gold digging ants, 85.
- Gond, a Dravidian tribe, 309.
- Gopa*, the, 181.
- Gorgias, a general under Alexander, 59.
- Gotiputta, 217.
- Govindarāja, a subordinate of Seuṇchandra, 248.
- Grāmaṇi*, 181.
- Grāmavṛiddhas, village elders, 81.
- Grāmikas*, (village headmen), 10.
- Great Decease of the Buddha, 136.
- Gr̥dhra-kūta, see Kalugumalai, 252.
- Greece, 80, 81.
- Greek ambassadors to India, 89-91.
- Greek writers on Brahmin philosophers, 291.
- Greek writings, value of the, on India, 81-82.
- Gṛhya sūtras*, the, 284, 333, 343.
- Guilds, maintenance of troops by, 189.
- Gujurat, 18, 171.
- Gunjas*, see *ratīs*, 279.
- Gupta age, the, 26.
- H
- Haihayas, the 19, 26; exterminated by Mahāpadma, 17-18.
- Hairwashing ceremony, 110, 162.
- Hannibal, 318.
- Harappa, script of, 323, sculptures at, 342.
- Haraprasada Śāstri, 247 n.
- Harisheṇaṣ author of the *Bṛhatkathākośa*, 329.
- Harmatelia, a city ruled by Ambigerus, 41.
- Harpalus, satarap of Babylon, 69.
- Harsha, 158.
- Harsha-charita*, the, of Bāṇa, 246.
- Haryankas the, 348, 352.
- Haryanka *kula*, Bibmisāra of the, 11.
- Hasdrubal, 318.
- Hāthigumpā inscription of Khāravēla 18, 20, 202, alleged reference to a Nanda era in the, 12; mention of Nandarāja in the, 13.
- Hecataeus of Miletus, value of the works of, 83.
- Hegesander, 134, 168, 169.
- Heliodorus, ambassador of Antiochus, 305.
- Hellenic influence, 2; on Chandragupta, 198, 199; on the Mauryan court, 354-56.
- Helots 111.
- Hemachandra, 134, 136, 148, 164.
- Hephaestion, a general under Alexander, 46-7, 51; colonisation of Rambakia by, 77; and the subjugation of the Mālavas, 70; and Patala, 75; and the younger Porus, 65-6; return, of, 69, 70.
- Heracles, 39, 53, 54, 250, 306; alleged foundation of Pāṭaliputra by, 158 n; legends about, 100, 101; Megasthenes on, 90; libation to, by Alexander, 69; and the Pāṇḍyas, 44; story of, 164; worship of 106, 305.
- Hercules, 31, 52-53; image of, in front of Porus' infantry, 110; the Sibis traced their descent from, 70.
- Herodotus, 32, 82, 83, 116 n; "Indians" of, 31; on the conquest of the Indians by Darius, 83; on the extent of the empire of Darius in India, 31; on the tribute paid by "India", 29; period between, and Alexander, marked by a set back in the Greek knowledge of India, 87; references to India and Indians by, 84-86.
- Herzfeld, on the Sattagydiens, 30-31; on Hidu, 31.
- Hertel, 193.
- Hidu (Hindu), "Indians" of Herodotus, 31.
- High Hindi, 317.
- Hillebrandt, 193; on the *Arthasāstra* and the epics, 191, 195.
- Himavat-kūta, 147
- Himayāna Buddhism, 316.
- Hippalus, 273 n.
- Hippasioi, see Aśmaka, 47.
- Hiranyavāha (Eronnaboas), 315.
- Hiuēn Tsang, Chinese pilgrim, 30, 221, 222; on Aśokan stupas, 219, 220; on Mahendra, 209n; on Pūrṇavarman, 248; on the treasures of king Nanda's precious substances, 24; visit of, to the stupa of Kanakamuni, 213.
- Holdich, on the location of Nysa, 35.
- Horse, the, in Indian warfare, 109-110.
- Hultzsch on Aśoka's claim of Gods mingling with men, 234; on the Aśokan edicts and *Dhammapada*, 230; on the extent of Aśoka's empire, 203-204.
- Hūṇas, the, 146, 147.
- Hunting dogs, the Greek writers on the, 98.
- Huvishka, 283.

Hwen (Hiuen) Thsang, on the origin of the Śākya-Mauryas, 142 n.
 Hydaspes, the 28, 35, 39; the ruler of Abhisāra and the battle of, 36.
 Hylobioi (Vānaprasthas), the most honoured among Sarmanes, 107, 108, 163 and n, 334.
 Hyparch, a provincial official under the Nandas, 22, 24, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41.
 Hypasioi, see *Aśmaka*, 47.

I

Iamb (o)ulus, Greek author, received at Pātaliputra, 169, 354.
 Ikshvāku (okkāku) king, 290.
 Ikshvākus, the exterminated by Mahāpadma, 17.
 Ila, see Ceylon, 253.
 "India" (Indus valley), tribute paid in gold-dust by, 29.
 India, size of, according to Greek writers, 91-92.
 Indian Dionysius, Megasthenes on, 90.
 Indian Philosopher in Greece, 319.
Indica, the, of Megasthenes, 90-91, 164; value of the, 135.
 Indo-Aryan language, changes in the, 320.
 Indo-China, 100.
 Indo-Greeks, coinage under the, 283.
 Indradatta, a grammarian, 328.
 Indrapālita, 244.
 Industry under the Nandas, and the Mauryas, 260-69.
 Ipsus, 151.
Inquiries, a work of Hecatacus, 83.
 Irāvati, (Hydraotis, Parushni, Rāvi), 28.
 Iśila (Siddhāpura), a subordinate division of Suvarṇagiri, 223.
 I-tsing on the image of Aśoka in monastic robes, 243.
 Ivory works, 265.

J

Jacobi, 191, 193, on the *Arthasāstra*, 195; on the *Samachāris*, 161 n.
 Jaina canon, the 286.
 Jainism 248; Kauṭilya's animosity towards, 324; patronage to, 245, 246; and Sanskrit, 325, 326; in South India, 252.
 Jain literature, 340-41.
 Jalauka, a son of Asoka, 219, 245.
 Jamadagni (Yamataggi), 288.
 Jambudvīpa, 233.
 Jambukola, 218.
 Janaka king of Mithilā, 19.

Jānapada (Rāshṭra) an administrative division, 21, 22, 120, 224, 225.

Janapadakalyāṇī, mother of Aśoka (?) 208.

Jānussoni, 289.

Jātakas, the, 224, 274, 275, 308; on the different kinds of śilpas, 349; on the units of currency, 279; on the voyages of the Indian merchants, 270.

Jātakamāla, a work of Aryaśūra, 196.

Jaṭilakas, the 164.

Jaṭilian, minister of Chandragupta, 164.

Jatinga Ramesvara, Minor Rock Edict at, 204.

Jaugada, Asoka's inscription at, 203, 204, 205, 303.

Jayaskandhāvāra, camp of victory, 158.

Jayaswal K. P. 191; on the two sculptures at Patna, 345 and n.

Jēṭha, (alderman) 274.

Jewellery in the Nanda Maurya period, 268.

Jhelum, battle of the 57-64.

Jñātrkaputra, see Mahāvīra, 296.

Johnston F. H., 191; on the *Arthasāstra*, 196.

Jolly, on the *Arthasāstra*, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195.

Junagadh Rock inscription of Rudradāman, 134; mention of Chandragupta in the, 139.

Justice, administration of, 185-187.

Justin, 13, 23, 41, 135, 151, 166; on the meeting of Chandragupta with Alexander, 133, 144; on Chandragupta's overthrow of the existing government, 144-145; on the Mauryan revolution, 24; on the oppression of Chandragupta, 148, 157-58. on the origin of Chandragupta, 141; on 'the royal harlot', 50, reference by, to the feats of Chandragupta, 143; sources of, on Chandragupta 143.

K

Kabir, 317.

Kabul, (-kopen) part of the empire of Cyrus, 30.

Kahāvati, of Bhadrēśvara, 136.

Kaiyaṭa, 328, 329.

Kākaṇi, 213 n.

Kākavarna, 301.

Kalanos, (Kalyāṇa ?) engaged in the study of nature, 105, 106.

Kālāpa, a work on grammar, 328.

Kālāsoka, (Aśoka), 301.

- Kalatai, a people in North West India, 83.
- Kalhaṇa, historian of Kashmir, 219, 244; on Jalauka, 245.
- Kālidāsa, 334.
- Kalinga, 11, 20, 205, 212; the Chetas in, 246; Aśoka's conquest of, 155, 210-11, 219, 309; Aśoka's remorse after the war against, 229; 231; independence of, till the days of Aśoka, 168; part of the Nanda empire, 260.
- Kalinga edicts, 167, 205, 212, 233.
- Kalingas, the, 26; exterminated by Mahāpadmananda, 17, 180.
- Kallatai, a tribe in the Persian empire, 84.
- Kallil Ātiraiyanār, 253.
- Kalpadruma, 344.
- Kalpaka, 15.
- Kalpasūtra, the, of Bhadrabāhu, 142 n., 161, 164, 298, 333, 341.
- Kāśī, Aśoka's inscription at, 204, 313.
- Kalugumalai (Gṛdhrakūṭa), 252.
- Kaluvāki, w of Aśoka and mother of Tivala, 214.
- Kalyāni, in S. W. Ceylon, 256.
- Kāmandaka, *Niṭisāra* of, 146.
- Kamandakīya Niṭisāra*, 195.
- Kāmarūpa, (Suvārṇakūṇḍya) (Assam) 221, 263; fragrant wood in, 266.
- Kāmasāstra*, 194, 337-338.
- Kāmāśoka, see Aśoka, 301.
- Kāmasūtra* the, of Vātsyāyana, 194; and the *Arthasāstra*, 195.
- Kambojas, a tribe in N. W. India, 146, 154, 217, 222, 225; a republic, 173.
- Kanakamuni, see Koṇakamana, 213.
- Kanauj, 245, 300.
- Kāñchi (puram), Aśoka's stupas near, 222; Aśokavarma, a ruler of, 249.
- Kantakaśodhana courts, 185, 186, 187.
- Kāṇvas, dvijas, 140.
- Kāṇva period, 131.
- Kapila, son of Prahlāda, on jñāna, 336.
- Kapilavastu, 269.
- Kapiśi (Ka-pi-shin, Ki-pin, Kophen), 30.
- Karmakāras, 112.
- Karmanda, 334.
- Karmania, journey of Craterus to, 80.
- Karri plain, battle of the Jhelum in the, 61.
- Ikāsākṛtsna, 335.
- Kāśeyas, the, exterminated by Mahāpadma, 17.
- Kashmir, and Aśoka, 219-220.
- Kāśī (Banares) 21, 263, 270, 310 313, and the Śaiśunāgas and the Nandas, 17; textile manufacture in, 262.
- Kāśikā* commentary, 260.
- Kaspapyros (Kaspapyrus), city of Gandhāra, 83.
- Kassapa, a Vedic Ṛṣi, 287.
- Kassapagotta, a missionary, 216, 217.
- Kathaians (Kathas, Kathaioi, Cathacans, Kshatraśreṇi), 38, 66; 69, 173; marriage among the, 102; *sati* among the, 103.
- Kathāśaritsāgara*, 17, 328.
- Kathāvattu*, the Abidhamma treatise, composed by Moggaliputta Tissa, 215, 230, 302.
- Kātyāyana *alias* Vararuchi, a scholar and grammarian of the Nanda period, 25, 178 n, 308, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 330 n, 331, 333; 340; on the Chola and Pāṇḍya country, 44; reference of, to Vyādi, 335.
- Kauśāmbi, (Vatsa) 203, 216, 269, 300, 239; Aśoka's instruction to the Mahāmātras of, 302-303; M. P. E. at 204; textile manufacture in 362.
- Kauśāmbikā, a śākha of the Uttarabalissaha gaṇa, 298.
- Kaushitaki Brāhmaṇa*, 310.
- Kauṭilya (Chāṇakya), 3, 4, 25, 135, 164, 171, 174, 175, 177, 182, 187, 188, 189, 190, 192, 193, 196, 198, 199, 226, 252, 265, 267, 268, 270, 271, 273-279, 308, 332, 333, 335, 337, 338, 339, 340, 360; animosity of towards Buddhism and Jainism, 324; and Bindusara, 166; warlike activities of, 167-68; Chancellor of Chandragupta Maurya, 191; Chancellor of the Mauryan empire, 161; going of, to Pāṭaliputra, 325, hostility of, to non-monarchical states, 173; the Indian Bismarck, 200; innovation of, in the administration of justice, 186, 187; part of, in the Mauryan revolution, 146-47, 148; share of in the building up of the Mauryan administrative system, 179; Stein on, 196; on the personal safety of the king, 119; on the state dept. to look after foreigners, 354; on the sources of income of the government, 183-84; on the Tāmraparṇika, 42.
- Kauṭumbini, a śākhā of the Uttarabalissaha gaṇa, 298.
- Kavi, a minister, 330.
- Kāvyalankārasūtravṛtti*, of Vāmana, 330.
- Kāvya, during the Nanda-Maurya period, 330-331

- Keith, 191.
 Kekaya, 310
 Kera (Chera), 43.
 Kerala (Chera), 43, 45, 251.
 Keralaputa (Ketalaputa) 238,
 250; outside Aśoka's empire, 219.
 Khallātaka, 167
 Khālsi, 251.
 Khāravēla, Hathigumpha inscription of, 13, 20, 202.
 Khariboli Hindi, 317.
 Kharoshthi script, 205, 220, 233;
 origin and evolution of the 323,
 352.
 Khaśa, 146.
 Khaśarājya, 167.
 Khotan, and Aśoka, 229.
 K'ien-t'ò-lo, see Gandhāra, 30.
 King, ministers and council of the,
 176-177; and ownership of land,
 177 and *n*; powers and duties of,
 174-76.
 Ki-pin see (Kāpiśi), 30.
 Kikatas, an Anārya clan, 9, 146,
 147 *n*.
 Kleitarchus, a follower of Alexander,
 88—9, 111; on Alexander's encounter
 with monkeys, 96.
 Kleisobora (Kriṣṇapura), a city of
 the Sursaeas, 305.
 Kod (t) umbara (Hudumbara),
 woollen goods of, 263.
 Koinos, a general of Alexander, 50,
 52, 56, 61; exhortation of, to
 Alexander to return home, 67-
 8; left behind by Alexander at
 the Chenab 65; death of, 69.
 Kokala, a place in the country of
 the Oreitai, country of the
 Oreitai, 76.
 Kol, 309, 313, 321.
 Koṅakamana (Kanakamuni, Kōn-
 gagamana) a legendary Buddha,
 Aśoka's visit to the stupa of,
 212—213.
 Konkan, 271.
 Kophaïos, a chieftain that helped
 Alexander, 51.
 Kophen see Kapisi, 30.
 Kos, 238.
 Kośala, 21, 310, 313; Buddhism in,
 299, Kingdom, 280. Śrāvastī,
 capital of, 269.
 Kosalā devi, 154.
 Kośāmbi (Kosam) a centre of pro-
 vincial administration, 223; Aśoka
 column, 361.
 Kosambi, on the Taxila Hoard,
 280 *n*, 281 *n*.
 Kośar (Satyaputras?), 254, 255, 251.
 Koshtha, temple, 338.
 Koshthāgārādhyakṣha, Superintendent
 of warehouses, 177.
 Koṭikapura, 161.
 Kramrisch, on Mauryan sculpture,
 387.
 Krishna and Heracles, 101.
 Kriṣṇāla a unit of weight, 279.
 Kriṣṇapura (Cleisobora ?) a city of
 the Sūrasenas, 101, 305.
 Karoshṭiya, 328.
 Kshanika, a doctrine, 298, 299.
 Kshatri (yas) (Xathroi) 40; submis-
 sion of the, to Alexander, 74.
 Kshatriyaśreṇi (Khathoi), a republic,
 173.
 Kshemendra, epitomiser of the
Brihatkaiā, 20, 141.
 Kshudrakas (Oxydrakai), 39, 40, 70;
 subjugation of the, by Alexander
 73; Visit to Alexander, by the
 leading men among the, 121.
 Kotivarṣiya, a śākhā of the
 Godāsagaṇa, 298.
 Kotūhalasālās, 294.
 Kukurā, a republic, 173.
 Kukuṭārāma, 215 *n*.
 Kumāra, a title of the Viceroy of
 Tosali and Ujjeni, 167, 223, 224.
 Kumarika (Coniaci), 44.
 Kumrahar, 357, 357, 383; ruins of
 Maurya buildings at, 159.
 Kunāla, a son of Aśoka, 214, 215 *n*,
 244, 245; and Khotan, 220.
 Kuṇi Vādava (Kunaravādava), 328.
 Kuntala, and the Nandas, 20.
 Kuru, a republic, 17, 173, 310.
 Kurukshetra, 19.
 Kurundogai, the 255.
 Kushāna, 199.
 Kushans, coinage under the, 283.
 Kuṭadanta, 289.
 Kuvanna (Kuveṇi) and Vijaya, 256.

L

- Lagman, Aśoka's inscription at,
 204, 205.
 Laghuparibhāshāvṛtti, 327. °
 Lagos, father of Ptolemy, 48, 51.
 Lae(k)edaemonians, and the helots,
 111.
 Land, ownership of and tax on, in
 India, according to Greek writers,
 114—115.
 Lankā (Ceylon) 257.
 Las Bela, the land of the Oreitai, 77.
 Latage, feeding of monkeys at, 97.
 Later Nandas, 23-26.
 Lauria,, gold tablet, 343.
 Lauriya-Araraj, Aśokan column
 at, 205, 313, 361, 362.
 Lauriya Nandagarh, column at,
 205, 361, 362, 364, 365, 368,
 371, 377; lion figure on the column
 at, 370.

- Law of deposits in India, Greek writers on, 112, 113.
- Learning (Sanskrit) under the Nandas and Mauryas, 324-25.
- Legends, of the Greek writers, 100-101.
- Leonnatus, 77; victory of, against the Oreitai, 76.
- Libya, 83.
- Lichchhavis, 19, 39.
- Lichchhivika, a republic, 173.
- Life of Apollonius of Tyana, by Philostratus, 83.
- Luders H. 313; on the Satiyaputas 251.
- Lohanipur, images from 379, 388.
- Lokāyata, 288, 335.
- Lomaśa Rishi cave, 376, 377, 385, 386, 387.
- Louis XIII, 15.
- Lumbinivana, 184, 213.
- Lysimachus, a general under Alexander, later king of Thrace, 59.
- M
- Macdonald, on the marriage compact between Seleucus and Chandragupta, 154; on the Sophyte's coins, 127; on the two classes of imitation of Athenian coins, 128, 129.
- Macedon (Madhuka or Madhudana), known to Indians, 132 n.
- Machatus, father of Philip, 56, 78.
- 'Machiavellian' nature of the *maṇḍala* theory, 188.
- M'Crindle on the attainments of Alexander's men, 80.
- Madhyadeśa, 260, 310.
- Mādhyamika, march of a Greek army to, 355.
- Madhuka, identification of, 132n.
- Madra, 310.
- Madraka, a republic, 173.
- Madurā, capital of the Pāṇdyas, 250, 252; textile manufacture at, 262.
- Magadha, 21, 136, 141, 280, Buddhism in, before the days of Asoka, 299; empire, 172, 173; extent of the empire of, during the time of Alexander, 87; empire under the Nandas, the, exposed to a twofold danger, 132; factors for the greatness of, 9-10; famine in, 165, 297; language in, 313, 314; veneration of Alexander's altars by the kings of, 68.
- Magadhi canon, 286.
- Magadhi dialect, 205, 317.
- Magas of Cyrene (Maka), 166, 206, 207; 217 Aśoka a contemporary of, 138.
- Maggadesako, an order of 'amaṇa' 294.
- Maggaduśi, on order of Śramana, 295.
- Mahābhārata, 166, 195, 199, 284, 308, 349, 366.
- Mahābhārata battle, date of the 323
- Mahābhāṣya*, the, of Patañjali, 133, 166 289, 295, 307, 330, 331.
- Mahābodhīamsa*, 13, 23.
- Mahāgiri, successor of Sthūlabhadra, 298.
- Mahākosala, 309.
- Mahāmātra, 10, 15, 22, 115, 183, 200, 214; a provincial officer, 223; a high ranking official, 225-226; Council of the, 226.
- Mahāmātras, of morality, 236; occupied with the welfare of the Ājivakas, 297.
- Mahāmātriya*, the Secretaries, 179.
- Mahāpadma Nanda (Pati (Ugrasena, Agrammes, Xandrames), 13-20; 132, 142; contemporary of Alexander, 141; political unity of N. India under, 260; successors of, Śūdra according to the Purānas, 140; titles of, 350; 351.
- Mahāparimbhāṇa Sūtra*, on the Moriyas, 141--142.
- Mahāsaṅghika, 300, 301, 303.
- Mahāsaṅgīti, 300.
- Mahāsetthi, 274.
- Mahāsthān inscription, 83, 222, 283.
- Mahāvamsa*, the 154, 203; on the antiquity of the Pāṇḍya kingdom, 44; on the early history of Ceylon, 257-59; on the adoption of Buddhism by Aśoka, 210; on Aśoka's message to the king of Ceylon, 243; on the third Buddhist Council, 215, 216.
- Mahāvamsā Tika* the, 134, 161, 167; on the Mauryan Revolution, 147, 148.
- Mahāvīra (Nātaputta, Jñātrikaputra), 10, 286, 298, 313, 325; founder of the Nirgrantha order, 296; liberation of, 136.
- Mahāyāna Buddhism, 231.
- Maheśva, (Mahishmati), 18
- Mahindra (Mahendra); a son of Aśoka, 209, 209 n; brother or Aśoka, 222; Pali canon taken by, to Ceylon, 317, 318; stūpa of, near Madura, 222; and Ceylon, 218-219, 258; *nirvāṇa* of, 259.
- Mahisāsaka, Buddhist school, 303.
- Mahisha, textile manufacture in, 262.
- Māhishmati, the capital of the Haihayas, 18.
- Maithilas, the, exterminated by Mahāpadma, 17, 19.

- Majjhima**, a missionary, 216, 217.
Majhimanikāya 35; on the performance of sacrifices, 290-91.
Maka, see Magas of Cyrene, 206, 207, 217.
Makara, the *vāhana* of Ganga, 344.
Makkhali Gosāla, a Tīrthika teacher and founder of the Ajivaka order, 295.
Makran, rounding of the coast by Nearchus, 80.
Malakonda, natural cavern at, 252.
Malakūṭa (Pāṇḍya), Capital, stūpa near 222.
Malayaketu, 146.
Malay Archipelago, 270.
Malay peninsula, 270.
Malava (Malloi) a people of the Punjab, 39, 40, 70, 262; presents of the, to Alexander, 267; subjugation of the, by Alexander, 71-73.
Malayagiri, 340.
Malaysia 100
Maler, a Dravidian tribe, 309.
Mallaka, a republic, 173.
Mallanāga, 148.
Mallas, the 39
Malloi, see Mālava, 39, 40, 70, 262.
Malwa (Avanti), 18, 155.
Māmūlanār, 253, 254, 255, 256.
Māna, a unit of weight, 279.
Maṇḍala theory, 187-188, 200.
Mandanis, see Dandamis, 106; Megasthenes on, 291
Māndhātā, (Māhismati?), 18.
Mamgalas, Aśoka, on the performance of 306.
Mañibhadra Yaksha, statue of, from Pawaya, 380.
Maniyattappo (a Jatilian), a minister of Chandragupta, 161.
Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa, on Binḍuśūra, 330; on Kātyāyana, 329.
Mansehra, M. R. E. at, 204, 205, 238, 312; language of the inscription at, 314.
Mantriparishad, 227.
Manu, 164 n; on units of weight, 279.
Marco Polo, on raised beds, as protection against reptiles, 97n.
Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa the, on the Mauryas, 141.
Marshall excavation of, at Taxila, 125.
Marriage, 117, 117 n; and occupation rules in India, according to Greek writers, 116.
Martikhora, (maneater), description of the, by Ctesias, 87.
Māshūdāna, identification of, 132 n.
Maskarin, a class of Parivrājakas, 295.
Maski, Minor Rock Edict at, 204, 207, 313.
Massaga, (Masakāvati), capital of the kingdom of the Assakenians, 35, 55; capture of, by Alexander, 49-50;
Mathurā (Methora), 44, 203, 314, 317, 345, 383; capital of the Śūrasenas, 19, 101, 305; Buddhism in, before Aśoka, 299, 300; Kushana school of art of, 383; sculptures at, 379, 381, 382;
Mathurā stone-pillar inscription, 283.
Māthuri Vṛtti, a work, 328.
Matsya, 310
Matsya Purāna, 23,
Maurya, origin and derivation of the word, 140-41.
Mauryan art, animal figures in, 369-378; characteristics of, 347-48; isolated existence of, 390-91; remains of 346.
Mauryan bureaucracy, 178-179.
Mauryan court, ambassadors to, from the Hellenistic kingdoms, 89-91; influence of the Achaemenids in the, 355-59; and the Syrian court, 134-135.
Mauryan empire, establishment of the 2-3; fall of the, 247-48; military organisation in the, 2129, 188-89; southern limit of, 249; foreign policy, 156-57; government, central offices in the, 179-181; polity, features from foreign models, 173, 175, 178, 189-90,
Mauryan Pillared Hall, 346.
Mauryan Revolution, course of, 24-25
Maurya putra, 142 n.
Mauryas alleged sculptures of the, 378-384; income and expenditure under the, 179, 183-185; industry under the, 260-69; rule of the, in Kuntala, 248; supersession of the Nandas by, 145-46. trade under the, 269-279; the, in the Sangam literature, 253, 254, 255, 256.
Mauryas of Konkan, 248, 249.
Mediterranean art, 342.
Megasthenes, a Greek ambassador to the Mauryan court, 19, 32, 89, 91 n, 116 n, 117 n, 135, 152, 161, 164, 171, 261, 287, 353, 356, 360; and Kauṭilya, Stein on, 196; and Porus, 89-90n.; value of the account of 89-91; on the absence of famine and scarcity in India, 94; on the administrative organisation in the Mauryan state, 120-22; on the agronomoi, 224, 272, 278; on the Andhras, 43; on the artistic skill of the Indians, 102; on Ceylon, 256; on the city administration at Pāṭliputra,

- 120-121; on the department to look after foreigners, 354; on the Derdai, 85; on the fighting class, 188; on food and drink among the Indians, 116-117; on the foreign policy of the Indian kings, 156; on the foundation of Pāṭalīputra, 158 *n*; on the hunting of elephants, 96; on the Hylobioi, 163 and *n*; on the Indian elephants, 95, 96; on the Indian monkeys, 97; on Indian philosophers, 106-107, 287; on the Indian physicians, 107; on the Indian rivers, 93 and *n*; on Indian women, 107; on the kingdoms of South India, 249-50; on the laws of the Indians, 108 and *n*; on laws in India, 164; on law deposits in India, 112-113; on the length of India, 92; on the length of the royal road from Pāṭalīputra to the north west, 91; on Mandanis, 291; on marriage and occupation among the Indians, 116; on the military organisation in the Mauryan state, 120, 122; on the mineral wealth of India, 95; on the Nirgranthas, 296-297; on the Oxydrakai and Dionysus, 306; on Pandaia, 101; on public spectacles attended by Chandragupta, 162; on the races in India, 100; on the role of Indians in foreign warfare 31; on rural administration in the Maurvan state, 120; on the safety of the king's person, 176; on the sages, 104; on serpents in India, 98; on the setting of the Bears in South India, 43; on seven tribes or classes in India, 113-115; on slavery in India, 111-112; on Indian social organisation, 105; on the Śramanas 293, 294; on the strength of Chandragupta's army 188; on the supply of gold, 85; 103; on the tigers in the country of the Parsii, 99; on the trade of South India, 42; on some wild animals, 99, on the worship of Heracles, 305; use of the legends about Dionysus and Herakles by, 100-101;
- Meghāksha (Meghanāda) king of the Persians, 146.
- Meleager, a general under Alexander 59.
- Memphis, Indian figures at, 218.
- Menander, 198.
- Meros, Mt., (Koh—i—Mor) 43, 48, 49.
- Merutunga, author of the *Vichāraśeṇī* 156.
- Metal works, 266-67.
- Methora see Mathura, 101, 305.
- Metronymics, use of, 15 *n*.
- Meyer, J. J. 112 *en*, on the *Arthasāstra*, 191, 192, 195.
- Miletus, Hecataeus of, 83.
- Milinda Panho* the, 13, 15; stories about Chandragupta in the 134; on Chandragupta's overthrow of the Nandas, 145-46.
- Minor Rock Edicts, the 204, 206, 211, 233, 244.
- Midland dialect, 315, 316, 317.
- Mineral science (*dhātusāstra*), 339.
- Mithilā (Janakpur), 19
- Modubae, see Mutibas, 43.
- Moeres (Moriya or Maurya), a king of Taula, 41.
- Moggaliputta Tissa, religious missions of, 203, 216-217 and 216 *n*; 259; and Aśoka, 303-304; composition of the *Kathāvatthu* by, 230; and the Third Buddhist council, 301-302.
- Mohen-jo-Daro, script of, 323, 324; sculptures at, 342; weights in, 282 *n*.
- Mōhūr, 254; rebellious chieftains of, 255.
- Moksha*, divorce, 185,
- Monahan, 113*n*, 120 *n*, 159 *n*.
- Moniyānagara, perhaps identical with Pippalivana. 143.
- Monkeys, Greek writers on, 96-97.
- Moriya (Morieis, Meroes, Moeres) 141, 142 *n*; and mora, 143 *n*.
- Moriyar, 155, 253, 254.
- Mousikanos see Musicanus, 29, 40, 41, 45, 150
- Mrichchhakatika* of Śūdraka, 318
- Muchukarna ? see Musicanus, 74.
- Mudrārākshasa*, of Viśākhadatta, 142 184, 144*n*, 147, 171, 182, 208; on the origin of Chandragupta Maurya, 141, 142; account of the Mauryan revolution in the, 25, 146-47.
- Mūlakadeva, a missionary, 216.
- Multan, 83.
- Murā, 140.
- Mūshika, a district in Kerala, 45.
- Musicanu (o) s (Mousikanos, Muchukarna ?), the greatest king in the lower Indus, 40; attempt of, to expel the Macdonians from N. W. India, 150; enmity of, with Sambos, 41; gold and silver 'mines' in the country of, 29; peculiar usages in the kingdom of, 111; rebellion and execution of, 74-75; Onesicritus on the country of, 45.
- Muṭasiva, king of Ceylon, 257.
- Mutibas (Modubae), a tribe, 43, 321.
- Mycal, Persian defeat at, 32.

N

Nābhakas, a tribe, 217, 222, 223.
 Nābhāpāntis (Nabhitis), a tribe, 217, 222, 223.
 Nāgas, the in Ceylon, 254, 256.
 Nāgadvīpa (northern Ceylon), 256.
 Nāgaraka, city magistrate, 181, 198.
 Nāgarasobhini, 10
 Nāgaravyavahāras, the Mahāmātras as, 225—226.
 Nāgārjuni cave, the 385, 386.
 Nāgoji, 328.
 Nakshi-Rustam, inscription of Darius at, 359.
 Nālandā, 269.
 Nānāghat cave inscription, 305.
 Nandas, the 1, 4, 11-20, 132, 168; administration under the, 21-23; and Chandragupta's extraction, 140; extent of the Empire of the, 26-27; industry under the, 260-69; language of the, 313; Magadha under the, 172; power of the, heard by Alexander, 67; in Tamil literature, 253-55; trade under the, 269-279; traditions about the rule of the, in the Karnataka, 249; overthrown by Chandragupta, 135, 142, 145-47, 154, 156.
 Nanda era, 12.
 Nanda-Maurya period, early foreign coins in India in the, 123-131.
 Nandarāja, 12, 13, 20.
 Nandrum, 12, 144.
 Nārada, on the validity of royal decree, 174.
 Nāradasmr̥ti, the, 199.
 Naramedha, 289.
 Nātabhāṭa, monastery of 300.
 Nātaputta, see Mahāvira, 142n, 206.
 Natural History, a work of Pliny the Elder, 91 n, 272.
 Nātyaśāstra, of Bharata, 331.
 "Nau Nand Dehra" (Nander), 18.
 Nāvadyaksha, 189.
 Nava Nanda, meaning of, 20.
 Nearchus, commander of the naval squadron of Alexander, 69, 70, 75, 76, 78, 80, 99, 113; and the subjugation of the Mālavas, 71; memoirs of, 88; on the arms and outfit of the Indian soldiers, 109-110; on the dress of Indians, 108-109; on the hunting of elephants, 96; on Indian rivers, 93; on the Indians dyeing their beards 102 n.; on Indian sages, 104, 105; on Indian women, 107; on the influence of the Brahmanas, 40; on the laws of the Indians, 108 and

n; on the making of fine webs, 94; on the setting of the Bears, 43; on the size of India, 92; on the size and shade of a tree, 94; on the skill of the Indians in arts, 110-111; on the skin of the gold digging ants, 85; on snakes in India, 97-98; on the tribes in north-western India, 108-109.
 Necho, an Egyptian king, 83.
 Nepal and Aśoka, 221; wollen goods from, 263.
 Nicanor, a satrap under Alexander, 51; placed in charge of Alexandria 46; Philip in charge of the satrapy of, 78; governor of the Assakenoi, slain, 65.
 Nigali Sagar, Aśoka's inscription at, 204, 205, 221, 361.
 Nigali Sagar, stupa of Kona Kamana at, 212.
 Nighandu, 288
 Nigantha Nātaputta, a Tirthika teacher, 295.
 Nigrodha, son of Sumana, 210.
 Nijhāti, conversion, 240.
 Nikāya, 228.
 Nikaia, (1) a city founded by Alexander, on the site of the battle of the Jhelum, (2) 64; embassy of Ambhi to Alexander at, 46.
 Nike, 126.
 Nipishṭa, 233.
 Nitisāra of Kāmandaka, on the Mauryan revolution, 146.
 Nirgranthas, (Niganthas) 215n, 225, 295, 296-299; in Ceylon, 257.
 Nirvāna, 230, 294, 300, 30, 303.
 Nomarch, a provincial official under the Nandas, 22, 34, 37, 38, 40, 41.
 Nomarchai, 39.
 North-west India, physical aspects of, 27-30.
 Nyāya (reason), exaltation of, 174
 Nysa, hill state of, 35, 69, 121; submission of the city of, to Alexander, 48-9.
 Nysa, the nurse of Dionysus, 48.

O

Ohind, 55.
 Oldenberg, 209 n.
 Omphis, see Ambhi, 46.
 Onesicritus 38, 116n; pilot of Alexander's ship, 69; pilot of Nearchus's fleet, 88; the existence of Ceylon, known to, 43, 92; sent by Alexander to the sages, 104, 105-06; on the banyan tree, 94; on the choice of kings among the Kathaians, 102; on the country of Mou-

- sikanos, 45, 111; on elephants, 95-96; on longevity and marriage in India 102; on the serpents kept by Abisares, 98 and *n*; on the size of India, 92; on slavery in India, 112; on Taprobane, 43.
- Opiai, a people in the North West India, 83.
- Ora (Udagram), subjugation of, by Alexander, 50-51.
- Oraons, a Dravidian tribe, 390. •
- Oreitai, country of the, 76, Apollonophanes, Satrap of, 77; Las Bela, the land of the, 77.
- Orobatis, a city fortified by the generals of Alexander, 51.
- Ossadioi (Vasati), 40, 74.
- Ottorakorrhas (Uttarakuru), 315. 'Owl' figure of the, on the Greek coins, 128, 129.
- Oxyk(c)anos (Portikanos), a chieftain, 41; submission of, to Alexander, 74.
- Oxydrakai (Oxydracae, Sydracae, Sudracae, Syrakousai) see, Kshudrakas, a people in the Punjab, 39, 70, 101, 121, 306.
- Oxyartes, father or Roxana, and satrap of Paropamisadae, 74; 78.
- Pabbajja, 243.
- Padaeans, a nomad tribe in north-west India, 84.
- Padmāvati, Queen, 214 *n*.
- Pakshilasvāmin, 148.
- Paktiyaka (Pashtu country), Indian tribes of, 85.
- Pakudha Kacchhāyana, a Tirthika teacher, 295.
- Pālaka, son of Pradyota of Avanti, 20.
- Palasimundu, 193.
- Pāli, 313-314, 316-17.
- Pali(m)bothra (Pātāliputra), 16, 101, 155, *n* 158, 168, 315, 354.
- Palidas, 217.
- Palkigundu, Minor Rock Edict at, 204.
- Pamukha (President) 274.
- Pañcālas, a republic, 17, 18, 173, 310.
- Panchayat, 121.
- Panchyats of castes, 185.
- Pandae (i) a, daughter of Herakles, 164, 250; Megasthenes on, 101
- Pandion, 15*n*
- Paṇḍukābhaya, king of Ceylon, 257.
- Pāṇḍya Ka (p)vāṭa, 42, 251.
- Pāṇḍya (Malakūta), 222, 250; 251, 271; country, 44; state; Megasthenes on, 101, outside Aśoka's empire, 219.
- Pandyas, the 44, 217, 238.
- Pāṇini, 208, 308, 316, 329, 331, 334; author of a Prākṛit grammar, 340; a scholar of the Nanda period, 25, 26; 326-27; the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of, 284; Bhāgala known to, 67; the *Bṛihatkaṭhā* on 326; mention of Subhūta by, 69; on the Mālavas, 39; on the Maskarin 295; on the N. W. trade route, 269; on the suffix *vun*, 304, 305.
- Paṇya-samstha, market place, 277.
- Pāradas, 223*n*.
- Parangorranār, 253.
- Pārasamudra, 193.
- Pārāśarya, 333.
- Pargiter, on the identification of Māhishmati, 18.
- Paribhājikā, see Parivrājaka, 294.
- Paribhājaka-ārama, 294.
- Parikshit, 11.
- Parindas, a tribe, 222, 223.
- Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha, 136, 206 and *n*.
- Parīśuṣṭa Parvan*, the, of Hemachandra, 134, 147, 161*n*; on the accession of Chandragupta, 136, 143, 147-48; on the home of Kautilya, 148.
- Parivrājaka (Paribhājaka) an order of ascetics, 293-294, 335; in Bengal, 299.
- Parkham, Jain image of, 379-380, 381, 383; Yakshas, 388.
- Parmenio, the army of, 33.
- Paropamisadae (i), 149, 152, 153; Alexandria the capital of, 78; change in the satrap of, 74; given by Seleucus I to Chandragupta • Maurya, 130.
- Parthia, revolt of, from Syria, 2.
- Parvata, 146.
- Parvatāka, 146, 147 and *n*.
- Parvateśvara (Śaileśvara), 146. •
- Paruṣhṇī (Irāvati, Hydraotis, Ravi), 28.
- Pāshamṇḍas, religious secs, 306.
- Pasni, a harbour, 77.
- Patala, Alexander, at, 76; submission of the ruler of, to Alexander, 75; Patalene, see Taula, 41.
- Pātāliputra (Paṇa, Pali(m)bot(h)ra(i), Pupphapura), 14, 16, 24, 117, 118, 143, 145, 152 and *n*, 155 *n*, 157, 158-59, 168, 182, 203, 204, 205, 218, 221, 245, 254, 255, 269, 272, 273, 312, 318, 329, 331, 341, 347, 352; alleged foundation of, by Herakles, 101; foundation of, by Udāyi, 158*n*; origin and growth of, 11; capital

- of Māgadha (the Maurya), 21, 223; architectural magnificence of, 339-340; building of, by Chandragupta, 345, 346; city administration of, 120-21; connection of, with the Hellenic countries, 355; courtiers at, 337; Curtius on the king and palace at 118-119 *n*; description of, 356-358; foreigners in, 157, 354, 355; hair-washing ceremony at, 162; Iamboulos at, 354; the influence of the Buddhist community at, over Aśoka, 302; length of the road from to the north-west, to 91; meeting of the council of Niṅgranthas at, 297, 298; the people of, 16; Rājāśekhara on the court of learning at, 325; royal place in, 158-159 and 159 *n*; third Buddhist Council at, 285; under the Nandas, 25-26; Upavarsha a resident of, 335; women in the palace at, 119; a wooden palisade round, 192.
- Patan**, a city founded by Aśoka, 221.
- Patāñjali**, author of the *Mahābhāshya*, 133, 160, 166, 208, 289, 307, 308, 325, 326, 327, 330, 331; Chandragupta known to, 139; commentary of, 26; on the introduction of images, 184; on Kātyāyana, 329; on the Maskarin, 295; on some grammarians, 328; on the suffix *run*, 304; on women studying *Mīmāṃsā*, 335.
- Pātheyya monks**, 299, 300.
- Patna statues**, (Yakshas), 378, 379, 380, 382.
- Patrocles**, admiral of Seleucus' 89; on the size of India, 91.
- Patronymics**, use of, 152.
- Paura**, 120.
- Paurava** (see Porus), the, 36, 37, 56, 57, 64, 65, 78, 139.
- Ṣauravas** (Purus), ancestry of the, 147.
- Pauravyāvahārikas**, 226.
- Paulavādhyakṣha**, 'Superintendent of weights and measures' 278.
- Pawaya**, Yaksha statue from, 380.
- Pearl-fishing**, Megasthenes on 95.
- Periplus** 193; on the coral trade of India, 199.
- Peithon**, son of Agenor, satrap of the lower Indus valley, 74, 78; and the subjugation of the Mālavas, 71; suppression of the revolt of Musicanus by, 75; transferred to the west of the Indus, 79. See **Pithon**.
- Penal code**, severity of, under Chandragupta, 158.
- Perdiccas**, a general under Alexander, 46, 47, 5, 59; and the subjugation of the Mālavas, 71, 72.
- Persepolis**, 32, 368; Alexander's behaviour at, 353; Hall of hundred columns at, 357.
- Persia**, 198, 273; advance of, to the Indus, 30-34; conquest of, by Alexander, 1; influence of, on Aśoka 233.
- Petenikas**, a tribe, 222.
- Peucelaotis** (Pushkalāvati), 35, 47, 51.
- Phegeus** (Phegelis), a chief in the Punjab, 38.
- Philadelphus** (Ptolemy II), 168.
- Philip**, son of Machatus, a commander under Alexander, 51, 69, 70. appointed satrap of Takshasila, 56; the Mālavas and the Kshūdrakas attached to the satrapy of, 73; satrap of Takshasila, 65, 78, 79; southern boundary of the satrapy of, 74; murder of, 77.
- Philip Arrhidæus**, gold coins of, 280; a *tatradrachm* of, 125.
- Philippus**, 139, 149, 151.
- Philosophers**, Indian, Greek writers on the, 106-108.
- Philosophy** in the Nanda Maurya period, 334-336.
- Philostratus**, author of *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, 83.
- Photius**, abridgement of the work of Ctesias by, 86.
- Phrataphernes**, Satrap of Parthia, 65.
- Phylarchus**, 134, 139, 169.
- Piadamšana** (Priyadaršana), see Chandragupta, 139, 140.
- Pillar Edicts**, 234; elaboration of the principles of *Dhamma* in the, 213.
- Pimprama**, the stronghold of the Adraistai, 33; submission of, to Alexander, 66.
- Pingala** (Nāga), 325; Aśoku put to school under, 331.
- Pipphalivana**, the republic of, 142.
- Piprahva stūpa**, gold tablet found at, 343.
- Pithon**, 149, 151; Antigonus favoured by, 150. See **Peithon**.
- Pi(c)tinikas**, a tribe, 217, 222, 223.
- Piyadasi**, see Aśoka, 207, 208.
- Piyadassana**, 208, see Aśoka
- Plataea**, Persian defeat at, 32, 354.
- Pliny the Elder** author of the *Natural History*, 86, 89, 91 *n*, 135, 150, 151, 153, 153*n*; on the coral trade of India, 199; on the destruction of Kapsi by Cyrus, 30; on Dionysius the envoy, 168; on the first Indian Grand Trunk Road, 272; on the Prasii, 16; on the Pāṇdyas,

- 44; on the strength of Chandragupta's army, 188.
- Plutarch, 41, 135, 139, 156, 166, 337: life of Alexander by, 88; on Alexander's capture of Massaga, 50; on Alexander's interview with the sages, 104; on Alexander in Persia, 352-353; on the altars of Alexander, 68; on 'Andrakottos' 141; on Chandragupta and Seleucus, 152; on the chariots under the Nandas, 188; on the dislike of the Nanda ruler by Chandragupta, 143; on the Mauryan revolution, 240; on the meeting of Chandragupta with Alexander, 14, 133, 144; on the Nanda army, 16; on "Taxiles" 35.
- Pokharasāti, 289.
- Polibothra, see Pataliputra, 273.
- Political outlook in India, 350-352.
- Polybius, 138; on Antiochus and Subhagasena, 246.
- Polygamy, in Taxila, 103.
- Pompeius Trogus, 133; the account of, epitomised by Justin, 13.
- Popular lore, 338-339.
- Popular worship, 338.
- Porphyry, 138.
- Porus, (Paurava, Purushottama, the Elder) 15 n, 36, 37, 51, 52, 67, 68, 79, 132, 139; and Āmbhi, 46; answer of, to Alexander, 56; Arrian on, 89-90 n.; and the battle of the Jhelum, 57-64, 126; the country west of the Beas committed to his charge, 68; fight of the Kathains against, 66; the Glaukukāyanas, placed under the rule of, 64; image of Hercules (Heracles) in front of the infantry of, 110, 305, 307; installation of, by Alexander, 149; and Parvataka, 147; satrapy of, under Alexander, 78; sent home to recruit fresh troops, 65.
- Porus (Paurava), the younger, 37; Hephaestion sent to reduce the territory of, 65-6.
- Poseidon, sea God, sacrifice to, by Alexander, 75.
- Posidonius, 273 n.
- Potali (Potana, Podana), capital of the Āsmakas, 18.
- Pottala, see Tauala, 41.
- Prachya (Prasioi), 315.
- Prachya dialect, the court language of the Mauryas, 312.
- Prachya tract, 310.
- Pradeśa, 227 n.
- Pradeśikas, (Pradeshtri), district officer, 22, 181, 182, 227, 227 n.; presided over the *Kaṇṭakasa-dhana* courts, 185.
- Pradyota, the son of Pālaka, 20; capture of, by Udayana, 330 n.
- Pradyota, line of, 19, 20.
- Praesti (Proshthas), 41.
- Prahlāda, *f.* of Kapila, 336.
- Prākṛit, 311, 312.
- Prākṛit dialects, script of, 323; of the east, the language of the court of Aśoka, 312; use of, 192-193; the vehicle of expression by the Buddhists and Jains, 340.
- Prākṛitprakāśa*, the 340.
- Pranaya* (benevolences), 184, 192, 199.
- Prasnañit, a king of the Ikṣvāku clan of Kosala, 17.
- Prasii (Prasi(o)ai, Prāchyas), the eastern peoples, 9, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, 90 n, 97, 141, 144, 145, 150, 153, 155, 157, 158, 172, 188, 315, 350; Alexander's idea of the conquest of, 87; Chandragupta from the, 143; tiger in the country of the, 99.
- Praśna Upanishad*, 22.
- Prātsākhyā* of Kātyāyana, 329.
- Prātsākhyas*, age of the, 327.
- Pratishthāna, 223, 269.
- Prativedakas*, (reporters), 227, and n.
- Princes, discipline and training of, 176.
- Prisoners, annual release of, by Aśoka, 229, 239.
- Prithu, a legendary hero, 171.
- Priyadarśana, 175.
- Priyangu, 330.
- Provinces, administration of the, in the Mauryan empire, 182-183.
- Proshthas (Praesti), a tribe, 41.
- Pseudo—Callisthenes, 147.
- Ptolemy, son of Logos, 51, 177; a general under Alexander, 48; and the capture of Aornos, 53-55; and the subjugation of the Mālavas, 71; afterwards king of Egypt, 59; Ptolemy II (Philadelphus), of Egypt (Turumaya), 89, 168, 206, 207.
- Pulindas, a Kol tribe, 321.
- Puṇḍra, textile manufacture in, 263.
- Puṇḍravardhana, 161.
- Puṇḍravardhaniya, a śākhā of the Goḍasa gaṇa, 298.
- Punishments, 224; mitigation of, 225.
- Punjab, river system of the, 28-30.
- Puppapura, see Pataliputra, 143.
- Pura, the capital of the Gedrosians, 77.
- Purāṇas, on Mahāpadmananda, 13-14; on the successors of Aśoka, 244;

- Purāṇādhishtāna, (Pandrethan,)
219.
Pūraṇa Kassapa, a Tīrthika teacher,
295.
Purāṇa literature, 333.
Puranic accounts, 135.
Purī, capital of the Mauryas of
Konkan, 248.
Pūrṇavarman, a descendant of Aśoka,
248.
Purohita, 175, 176.
Purus (Pauravas), 37, 147.
Purushas, (Pulisas), agents of the
king 200, 224-225, 227.
Purushamedha, 289.
Purushapura, (Peshawar), 223.
Purva Nanda, interpretation of, 20.
Pushkalāvati (Peuce laotis), 35, 47,
272; submission of, to Alexander,
51.
Pushpadanta, a Sivagaṇa, 329.
Pushpapura (Pāṭaliputra), 209, and
n.
Pushyadharman, 244.
Pushyagupta, the Rāshṭrīya of Chan-
dragupta in Surāshtra, 155; 160;
construction of the Sudarśana
lake by, 182.
Pushy(p)amitra, generalissimo of
Bṛihadratha, 246, 247; son of
Pushyadharman, 244; does away
with Bṛihadratha, 189;
Pygmies, a people in north west
India, 83.
Pyrrho, founder of the Sceptic system,
in India, 81.
Pyrrhus, Indian *mahouts* in the army
of, 318
Pythagoras, 106; influence of Indian
ideas on, 81.
Pythias of Lydia, 358.
- Quetta, 153.
'Queen's Edict', 205.
- R
- Rādhāgupta, chief minister of Bin-
dusāra, 167.
Raghuvamśam, the, 334.
Rāhula, 285.
Raichur, Aśoka's inscription in the
district of, 203.
Rājā, a title of the head of the repub-
lic, 173; a title of the *Sanghas* of
the Kurus and and the Pañchālas,
21.
Rājadharmakaustubha, the *Vishnu-
dharmottara* quoted in, 140.
Rājagriha, 269, 270; the council at,
284; remains of, 349.
- Rājapatha*, 270.
Rājaśāsana, and *dharma*, 198-199.
Rājaśekhara, 318; on the court of
learning at Pāṭaliputra, 325; on
Upavarsha, 335.
Rājasūya, a sacrifice, 171.
Rājāvalikathe, on Bhadrabāhu, 161,
Rājuka, an officer of the highest rank,
22, 224, 225, 226, 227.
Rājū, a source of revenue, 224.
Rajjagrāhaka, rope-holder, 224.
Rākshasa, the Nanda minister, 15,
146.
Rāma, a legendary hero, 171.
Rāmāyaṇa, the, 19, 195, 208, 308.
Rambakia, a village, colonisation of,
by Hephaestion, 77.
Rampurva, 267, 370, 373, 377,
Aśokan column at 204, 205, 361,
362; 365, 366, bull on the column
at, 370, 372, 376, 377, 382, 388;
lion on the column at, 372.
Rapson, on coinage in ancient
India, 279; on the coins of Sophy-
tes and Seleucus I, 127-28;
Rāshtra (Janapada), 224.
Rāshtrika (Rāthika), 222, 223, 225.
Rāshṭrīya, 22, 223.
Ratis (guñjas), a unit of weight, 127,
279, 280, 281, 282 n.
Rawlinson, on the Sattagydiens,
30-31.
Republics (Sangha), in the Mauryan
period, 173; tribes in N. W.
India, 70-73 weakening of the,
by Chandragupta, 337.
Rhodes, Deinon, a historian of, 89.
Rigveda, the, 262, 264, 265, 279, 288,
289, 343, 350.
River-gold, 95.
Rituals, Aśoka on the performance of,
233, 236, 237
Rock Edicts, 204, 212, 213, 222, 233,
234, 250; V and XIII, 154, 206-
207, 210-11, 217.
Rohana in S. E. Ceylon, 256.
Rostovtzeff, on Chandragupta, 198;
on the Hellenistic view of the
ownership of land, 177-178 n.
Roxana, favourite wife of Alexander,
74.
Royal decree, validity of, 174.
Royal hunt, suppression of, by Aśoka,
239, 241.
'Royal Road', 272.
Rudradāman, 233; Gīnar inscription
of, 134, 139, 155, 171, 199,
208.
Rummidēi, 221, 313, Aśoka's
inscription at 204; 205, 213,
column at, 361, 362, 365.
Rupnath, Minor Rock Edicts at,
204, 233; column at, 363.

Rural administration in the Maur-
yan state, 120.

S

Sabaragai see Ambashthas, 40.
Sabbakāmi, Thera of Vaiśāli, 300.
Sabus (Sabbas), see Sambos, 41.
Sages, Greek writers on the, 104-106.
Sahadeva, a missionary, 216. •
Sahajāti, 269.
Sahalya (Sahalin, Sukalpa), eldest son of Nanda, 23.
Sahasram, Minor Rock Edicts at, 204, 362.
Satiyaputa, (Kosar ?) 255; identification of the 238 n.
Saileśvara, see Parvateśvara, 146.
Śaiśunāga, 11, 280 n, 348.
Śaiśunāgas, 15, 16, 18, 19, 352.
Śakas, 146; driving away of the Greeks from Bactria by, 131; end of the rule of, 135.
Śaka(d)ṭāla, the minister of Nanda, 14, 147; father of Sthulabhadra, 297.
Śāketa, march of a Greek army to, 355.
Śakuni of Gandāhra, 142.
Śākya-Mauryas, origin of the, 142 n.
Śākyaputra, 142 n.
Salamis, Persian defeat at, 32.
Sālatura, Pāṇini connected with, 325.
Śāliśūka, 244, 245, 246, 283 n.
Śalva, 310
Samacharis, Jacobi on the, 161 n.
Samāharta, collector-general, 179 ; 181, 183, 198.
Samājas, 162, 237, 238.
Sāmāpā (near Jaugada), a centre of provincial administration, 223, 225.
Samāprabhlāram, 289.
Samataṭa, Aśoka's stūpas in 222.
Sampadī, 215 n, 244. •
Sambhūtivijaya, a Nirgrantha, 297.
Sambodhi, (Gayā) Aśoka's visit to, 211.
Sambo(u)s (Sabus, Sabbas), a king in the Punjab, 41; country of the, 105; abandonment of his city by, 74.
Samagraha, work of Vyādi, 327.
Samkarshaṇa, worship of, 305, 306.
Samp(r)ad(t)i(Bandhupalita, Vigatāśoka), 244, 245, 283 n; conversion of, to the Nirgrantha faith, 298.
Samaxus, attempt of, to expel the Macedonians from N. W. India, 150.
Sammāpāsa, 289.

Samsthādhyksha, market superintendent, 277, 278.

Samudra, a merchant prince 210 n.
Samyāniyapatha, roads leading to market towns, 271.

Śamyāprāsa, 289.

Śaṇavāsa, the teacher of Upagupta, 300.

Sāñchi, 215 n, 216, 345, 347, 371, 374, 375, 377; Aśoka's benefactions to, 15, 210; Aśokan column at, 361, 364; illustration of the *avadānas* at, 203; Minor Pillar Edicts at, 205; reliefs at, 389; stūpa at, 379.

Sandracottus, see Chandragupta, 24, 101, 139, 152, 168, 315.

Sandraphagos (Chandrabhāga), 315
Sangaio (Sañjaya ?), installed in the place of Astes, 47.

Sangala 68; capital of the Kathaians, captured by Alexander, 66.

Sangam period, 251

Sangam, Tamil academy, 112

Sangha, Buddhist, the 3; and Aśoka, 211, 214, 214, 215, 242, 243, 245, 285; and the Mahāmātras, 225.

Sangha, Corporation, 21, 173, 274.

Sanghamitt(r)a, ad. of Aśoka, 209, 209 n, 218, 259.

Sañjaya Belatthiputta, a Tīrthika teacher, 295.

Śankara on Pūrṇavarman, 248.

Śānkāśya, 300.

Śānkāyana Śrauta Sūtra, 288

Sankissa, Aśokan column at; 361; elephant on the column at, 370, 371, 376, 377.

Sanskrit grammar, 326-329.

Sanskrit learning, under the Nandas and the Mauryas, 324-26.

Sannidhātā, the 179.

Sarmanes (see Śramaṇas), 107, 163, 293, 334.

Sārṇāth, 346, 356, 375, 377, 383; Aśokan column at, 361, 362, 364,

365, 366; elephant at, 375; Minor Pillar Edicts at, 205, 302; monolithic rail at, 384-385; quadripartite at 370-74.

Sarre, on the Sattagydiāns, 31.

Śarvabhauma, 350.

Sarvārthasiddhi, 146.

Sarvāstivāda, a Buddhist school, 303.

Śaśigupta (Sisikottos), an Indian mercenary leader, 46; and Chandragupta, 142 n.

Śatadhanus, 244.

Śatadharman, 283 n.

Śatavāhanas, the, 246-47; title Piyadassana taken by the, 208.

Sati, in Taxila, 103.

- Satiyaput(r)a, 43-44, 238, 250, 251; outside Aśoka's empire, 219.
- Satputes, 251.
- Sattagyadians ('Thatagus'), people in the seventh Persian satrapy, 30-31, 33.
- Sattavāhas*, 274.
- Saubhūti, (Sophytes, Subhūta, Sopheithes) 69, 37; coins of, 126-127, 129; gold and silver "mines" in the country of, 29; Hellenistic influence on the coins of, 80; hunting dogs in the country of, 98; inspection of two month old babies in the kingdom of, 102.
- Śaunaka, author of the *Rig V. da-prāśīśākhya*, 329.
- Saura Bhagavad, 328.
- Sauraseni apabrahmā, 317, 318.
- Sāvira (Sophr or Sphir), 269.
- Savaras, a Kol tribe, 321.
- Sayambhava, a Nirgrantha, 297.
- Schwanbeck, on the use of the Indica by subsequent authors, 91.
- Sciapodes, a people of North-West India, 83.
- Scriptures, seven texts from Buddhist 212, and *n*.
- Scylax, a book on India by, 82-83. account of the voyage of, by Herodotus, 87.
- Sehwan (Sindimana?), 41.
- Seleucids, 2, 172, elephants on the coins of the, 375.
- Seleucus, a general under Alexander, 59, 61, 137-138, 151, 153, 271; allegiance of the Bactrian Greeks to, 130; and Chandragupta, 63, 79, 89, 130, 151-153, 156, 159, 169, 219, 273, 353-354; coins of, 127; 129. Deimachus sent to the court of Bindusāra by, 89.
- Semiramis, 76.
- Senāpati*, commander-in-chief, 189.
- Senart, 230; on Aśoka's adoption of Buddhism, 210 *n*.
- Seunachandra II, Yādava, Govindarāja subordinate of, 248.
- Seven Pillar Edicts, the, 205, 216, 228, 229, 232, 233, 236, 240.
- Seven tribes in India, according to Greek writers, 116.
- Sextus Empiricus, 81.
- Shādeunya*, six fold policy, 187.
- Shabazgarhi, 203, 204, 205, 312-15.
- Shama Sastri, Dr. on the *Arthasāstra*, 190, 191, 200.
- 'Shekel', a weight, the siglos based on the, 124.
- Sibis, (Śivas, Siboi), a republican tribe in the north-western India, subjugation of the, by Alexander, 38-39, 40, 70; country, 262;
- Dionysus considered a Greek representation of, 101.
- Siddapura, Minor Rock Edicts at, 204, 223, 249, 313.
- Śīla, Aśoka's stress on, 240.
- Śilappadikāram*, the on Madura, 250
- Simhasena, 160 and *n* 165.
- Sindhavas, 40.
- Sindi(o)mana (Sehwa?), capital of Sambos, 41, 74.
- Sin-Kiang, the city of Khotan, 318.
- Sir William Jones, on the Greek names of Chandragupta, 139.
- Siri Dhammāsoka (Aśoka) 241.
- Sisikottas, see Sasigupta, 46, 142.
- Śisunāga, father of Kālāśoka, 301.
- Śītādhyaksha*, Superintendent of agriculture, 177, 197.
- Śivas, see Sibis, 39.
- Slave (*dāsa*), 275.
- Slavery in India, 157; Greek writers on, 111-112.
- Ślokavārtika* 328.
- Smith, V. A. on Mahendra, 209*n*; on Aśoka's claim of Gods mingling with men, 234; on polishing of stone, 265; on the retirement of Chandragupta, 165 *n*; on the Satiyaputas, 238; on the territories ceded to Chandragupta by Seleucus, 153.
- Smṛti literature of Chandragupta's time, 164.
- Snakes, Greek writers on, 97-98.
- Socrates, 106 and an Indian philosopher, 81.
- Sodrai (Sūdras), 40.
- Sogdiana, conquest of by Alexander, 45.
- Sogdianians, 33.
- Sogdoi, the subjugation of the, by Alexander, 74.
- Sopara, Aśoka's inscription at, 203, 205.
- Sophagenus (Subhāgasena), 246.
- Sophytes, see Saubhūti, 29, 37, 69, 80, 98, 102, 126, 127, 129.
- Sourasenaï see Śurasenas, 101, 305.
- South India, and Ceylon--249 ff; trade of, 42.
- Spitaces, a nomarch, 37.
- Spooner, 345, 346, 356, 357; on the Zoroastrian period in Indian History, 198.
- Śramaṇas, (Sramanai, Sarmanes), 106, 107, 163, 210, 234, 241, 247, 293, 296, 297, 306, 334, 335; four kinds of, 294-295.
- Śrauta Sūtra, 284, 333.
- Śravaṇa Belgola, settlement of, Bhadrabāhu and Chandragupta at, 165, 249, 297.

- Srāvasti, the capital of Kosala, 183
269; 210 n; Anāthapiṇḍika, merchant prince of, 270.
- Ś(r)enis, guilds, 274, 275.
- Srinagari, town, built by Aśoka, 219.
- Syngāraprakāśa*, a work of Bhoja, 328, 330, 340.
- Śruta-kevalin, Jain saint, 165.
- Stadia, a measure, 91, 92.
- State, the, and industrial and commercial policy, 275-279.
- State landlordism, 197.
- Statira, *d.* of Darius *m.* by Alexander, 353.
- Stein A. 167, on the identification of places in the swat valley, 49; on the resemblance between the Khotanese and the Kashmiris, 220.
- Stein O., 113, *n.*, 174 *n.* 191; on the *Arthasāstra*, 200; on Megasthenes and Kauṭilya, 196.
- Sthānika*, the 181.
- Sthūlabhadra, son of Sakadala, 297; Mahāgiri, the successor of, 298.
- Stone cutting, 265.
- Strabo, 33, 41, 45, 47, 89, 91, 91n, 94, 96, 98n, 102n, 103, 107, 111, 116, 117, *n.* 135, 139, 153, 154, 169, 262; extracts from the memoirs of Nearchus in the works of, 88; sources of, on the king's hair washing ceremony, 110; on the Cathaeans, 38; on Chandragupta, 162, on Chandragupta and Seleucus, 152, 153, 154; on the gold embroidered garments of the Indians, 264; on the hair washing ceremony, 162; on the Hylobioi, 334; on husbandmen in India, 114, 115; on an incident in Sophytes' court, 98; on the kingdom of Mousikanos, 40; on law and deposits in India, 112-113; on marriage among the Kathaians, 102; on marriage and occupation in India, 116; on Megasthenes' account of the Indian Philosophers, 106; on Megasthenes at Pāṭaliputra, 152; on the mission of Demachus to the court of Bindusāra, 168; on the Oxydrakai, 39; on Pāṭaliputra, 356-57; on the people of South India, 43; on petrocles, 89; on the position of the ruler of Takshaśilā 35, 36; on punishments, 279; on the size of India, 91;
- Strī-adhyakṣha mahāmātra*, (*ganikā-dhyakṣha*), 226
- Stūpa, 344, 384.
- Subandhu, a minister of Nanda, Chandragupta and Bindusāra, 329, 330; a rival of Kauṭilya, 167; author of the *Vāsavadattā Nāṭyadhārā*, 330, 331.
- Subhadraṅgi, principal queen of Bindusāra, 167; mother of Aśoka (?), 208.
- Subhāgasena (Sophasenus) and Antiochus, 246.
- Subhūta see Saubhuti, 69.
- Sudāmā cave, the 346, 385, 386.
- Śūdras (Sodrai), a tribe, 40.
- Sudaršana lake, construction of the, by Pushyagupta, 155, 182.
- Sudracae (Oxydrakai), 39.
- Śūdraka, 318.
- Suhastin, conversion of Samprati to Jainism by, 245.
- Sumana, elder brother of Aśoka, klling of, 210.
- Sumanottara, 330.
- Śunga art, 384.
- Sunitha, 15.
- Śūrasena, 44.
- Śūrasenas (Sourasenoī), the 17, 19, honour of Herakles by the 101, 305.
- Surāshtra, a part of Chandragupta's empire, 155; a republic, 168, 173.
- Susa, 30, 159, 357.
- Susiana, 273.
- Susīma, a son of Bindusāra, 219.
- Suśruta, and the *Arthasāstra*, 195.
- Sūtrapīṭaka, 284.
- Suttas, the, 164.
- Suvarṇabhūmi 270; Aśoka's mission to, 274,
- Suvarṇagiri, a centre of provincial administration, 223.
- Suvarṇakudya (Kāmarūpa), textile manufacture in 262.
- Suvāstu, the territory of the Assakenians, 35.
- Svarga, 230.
- Svaśarājya, 167.
- Svayambhunath, shrine of, 221.
- Syālvāda, doctrine of, 298.
- Sybyrtius, satrap of Arachosia, 89.
- Sydracae, see Oxydraki, 39.
- Sylvain Levi, 313; on the *Arthasāstra*, 199.
- Syrakousai (Oxydrakai), 39.
- Syria, Antiochus, king of, 168-169; revolt of Bactria and Parthia from 2.
- Syrian court, and the Mauryan court, 134-135.

T

- Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, 268.
- Taittirīya saṃhitā*, 288.

Takshaīlā (Takila), 35, 59, 64, 88, 227; Ambhi of, 46; and Alexander, 37, 52, 55—57; Aramaic inscription at, 346, 352; and Aśoka, 203, 209, 282; coin finds at, 125; capital of Uttarāpatha, 158 n; 223, 354; a centre of provincial administration under the Mauryas, 223, 354; description of, 103-104; Kauṭilya of the college at, 325; Philip, the śatrap of, 65; revolt in, during the days of Bindusāra, 167; sages near, 104-106; seat of Kunāla's viceroyalty, 220.

Tambapaṇṇi, 219, 250 (Ceylon).

Tamil (z), origin of the word, 322.

Tamilakam (Draviḍa, Damirike) 43-4)

Tāmil literature, the Nanda and the Mauryas in, 253.

Tamil poems, on Mauryan war chariots, 188.

Tamralipti, 218; Aśoka's stūpas in, 222.

Tamraliptika, śākhā of the Godāsa-gaṇa, 293.

Tamraparṇi, see Ceylon, 43, 238.

Tāmrparṇikā, a pearl, 42.

Tantrayuktis borrowed by the *Tolkāppiyam* from the *Arthasāstra*, 192; in the *Arthasastra* and *Suśrūta*, 150, 336.

Taprobane, see Ceylon, 43, 95.

Tāranātha, 244; on the age of Pānini, 327; on the period of rule of Nanda, 23; on the warlike activities of Bindusāra and Kauṭilya, 167-168.

Tarn, 58, 159 n; on the territories ceded to Chandragupta by Seleucus. 153-54.

Tarukkha, 289

Tauala (Patalene, Pottala), a kingdom, 41)

Taxila see Taxiles, (Takshaīlā), 35, 37, 104-5, 125, 158n, 167, 220-282, 325, 346, 357, 354.

"Taxiles" see Takshaīlā, 35, 103.

Taxiles, (Ambhi), 47, 63, 64, 77-78, 79, 105, 139, 149.

Termilai (Tirmili), 321.

Textile industry, the, 262-264.

Thancsar, 19.

"Thatazus", see Sattagydiāns, 30-31

Thathari, 281.

Theistic movements in the Nanda-Maurya Period, 304-307.

Theragāthā commentary, stories about Chandragupta in the, 134.

Theravāda, 215; (Vibhajyavāda) school, 302.

Theravādins, 301.

Thomas, F. W., 189, 191,

Timosthenes, admiral of the fleet of Ptolemy Philadelphus, 89.

Tirthankaras, 165.

Tirthikas, Indian sophists 295.

Tissa 259.

Tishya, asterism of Aśoka's birth 207, 215 n, 239.

Tishyarakshitā, 215 n.

Tivala (Tivara), a son of Aśoka, 214, 243.

Todeyya, 289.

•Toleration, Aśoka on, 235-236.

Tolkāppiyam, the 328; *Tantrayuktis* borrowed by the, from the *Arthasāstra* 192.

Tosali (Dbauḷi), 223, 225.

Town administration under the Mauryas, 181.

Trade, under the Nandas and the Mauryas, 269-275.

'Translation compounds' in Indo-Aryan, 319.

Trayī, 333.

Triparadeisos (Triparadisus), partition of, 139, 149, 150, 151.

Tripiṭaka, 184, 284, 285.

Triratna, 242.

Trivarga, 194.

Trogus, 135, 144; sources of, on Chandragupta, 143.

Turamaya see Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt, 206, 207, 217.

Tushāspa (Yavanarāja), 223; governor of Girnār, 233; improvement of the Sudarśana lake by, 182.

Tyriespes, a satrap under Alexander, 46, 65; ruler of Paropamisadae, 74, 78.

U

Udayana, 330; capture of Pradyota by, 330n.

Udāyi, son of Ajātaśatru, 158n.

Udichya dialect, 314, 318; tract, 310.

Udyāna, the territory of the Assakenians, 35, and the Śākya Mauryas, 142 n.

Ugrasena, see Mahāpadma, 15, 18, 23.

Ujjayini, (Ujjain, Ujjeni) 167, 224, 227, 269, 317; and Aśoka, 203, 209; Buddhism in, before Aśoka, 300; a centre of provincial administration, 155, 223; Samprati's rule from, 245; Vāsavadattā of, 330.

Umarkot, 76.

Upagupta, 203, 221; spiritual guide of Aśoka, 213, 300; Thomas on, 216 n.

Upapatha, 270.

Upāsaka, 211.

Upavarsha, a scholar of the Nanda period, 25, 325; an author on Mimāmsas, 335.
 Upāyas, four instruments of policy 187.
 Uposatha ceremonies, 215; day 214.
 Uraśa, Arsakes, the chief of, 36, 68.
 Uśinara, 310.
Utpalini, a work of Vyāḍi, 327.
 Uttara, 274; a disciple of Mahāgiri, 298.
 Uttarabalissaha, a gaṇa founded by Balissaha, 298.
 Uttarakuru (Ottarakorras), 315.
 Uttarāpatha, 26, 158.
 Uttiya, king of Ceylon, 257, 259.

V

Vachabhumikas (*go-adhyakshas*) controllers of cowpens, 228.
 Vaḍugar, 255.
 Vaed(d)a (Yakha) 256, 257, 258.
 Vaikhānasa (Vānaprastha), 293.
Vaikhānasaśāstra, 334.
 Vairōdhaka, 146. Vaiśāli (Viśālā), 269; the Buddhist community at, 302; capital of the Vriji country, 19, 21; second Buddhist Council at, 299, 300-301.
 Vaiśika kalā, 337.
 Vājapeya, 289.
Vājasanya(i)samhitā, 268, 328.
Vājasanyei pratisākhya, work of Kātyāyana Vararuchi, 328.
 Vakkula, stūpa, 213n.
Vakyaḥpadīya, a work of Bhartṛari, 327.
 Vālmiki, 208, and n.
 Vāmadeva, a Vedic Ṛshi 288.
 Vāmaka, a Vedic Ṛshi 287.
 Vāmana, author of the *Kāvyaḷankārasūtra vṛtti*, 330.
 "Vamba Moriyar" 134.
 Vanga, textile manufacture in, 262, 263.
 Vararuchi, a scholar of the Nanda period, see Kātyāyana, 25, 325, 327, 330n. 340.
Vārarucham Kāvyaḷam, the 330.
 Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, 11.
 Varsaha, a scholar of the Nanda period, 25, 325.
 Varshakāra, 15.
 Vasātis (Ossadioi), submission of the, to Alexander, 74, 40.
 Vāsavadattā, 330.
Vāsavadattā Nātyadhārā, a work of Subandhu, 330, 331.
 Vasettha (Vasishtha), a Vedic Ṛshi, 287, 288, 293, 333.
Vasishtha Dharmasūtra, 293.

Vāsudeva, Garuḍa, pillar a Vidiśā in honour of, 305.
 Vāsudeva cult, 305, 306.
 Vatsa, (Kausāmbi), textile manufacture in, 262.
 Vatsarāja, 330.
 Vātsyāyana, 148, 308, 337; author of the *Kāmasūtra*, 195.
Vāyu purāna, reference to the, by Bāna, 22-23.
 Vedāngas, 333.
Vichārasreni, the, of Merutunga, 136.
 Vidarbha (Varad(h)ataḷa), an Aryan state, 321.
 Videha, 142, 308, 310; language in, 313.
 Vidiśā, 269; Aśoka's love with Devī at, 209; garuḍa pillar at, 305.
 Viduratha, a king of the Ikshvaku clan of Kosala, 17.
 Vidyādharas 253.
 Vigatāśoka (Samprati?), 244, 245, a brother of Aśoka (?) 208.
Vihāra, 214.
Vihārayātā, royal hunt, 162, 241.
 Vijaya, 257; and Ceylon, 256.
 Vijayasimha, the traditional conqueror of Ceylon, 44.
 Vijigishu, 3.
 Virkrama era, foundation of the, 136.
 Village government under the Nandas, 22, 181-182, 185.
Vinayapīḷaka, 284.
 Vinaya texts, 302.
 Virasena, 244.
 Viśākhadatta, the author of the *Mudrārāksasha*, 134.
Vishakanyā poison maiden, 147.
Vishaya, an administrative division under the Nandas, 22.
Vishṇudharmottara, the 146.
 Viṣṇugupta, see Kauṭilya, 146, 148 191.
Vishṇupurāna, the, 134, 140; on Pushyamitra, 246.
 Vishu, 192, 199.
 Viśvāmitra, 288.
 Vitāśoka, brother of Aśoka, 214, and 215n.
Vitī, a dramatic variety, 332.
 Vitihotras, the, exterminated by Mahāpadma, 17, 19-26.
 Vrātyas the, 10, 311.
 Vrijiika (Vriji) a republic, 19, 21, 173
 Vrisha, the vāhana of Śiva, 344.
 Vrishala, see Chandragupta, 139, 140, 294.
 Vrshasena, 244.
 Vrshni race, 306.
 Vyāḍi, a post-Pānini grammarian, 25, 325, 327, 329, 331, 335.
Vyāḍiparibhāshā, 327.
Vyāḍiparibhāshāvṛtti, 327.

Vyavahāra, 186.

W

- Waddel, 356, 357.
Walsh, on the Taxila Hoard, 280 n,
281 n.
Whitehead, R. B., on currency in
ancient India, 282; on the identi-
fication of Sophytes, 126, 128.
Winternitz, 191, 192.
Writing, origin and development of,
322-324.
Woman, present of an elephant to,
by her lover, 96.
Women, services of, to the king, 176.
Woodwork, 264-65.

X

- Xandrames (Agrammes, Mahāpadma)
14, 16, 23.
Xathaoi see Kshatri, Kshatriyas,
40, 74.
Xenophon, 12, 30.
Xerxes, Achaemenian emperor, 32,
368; equipment of the Indians
in the army of, 86, 318.

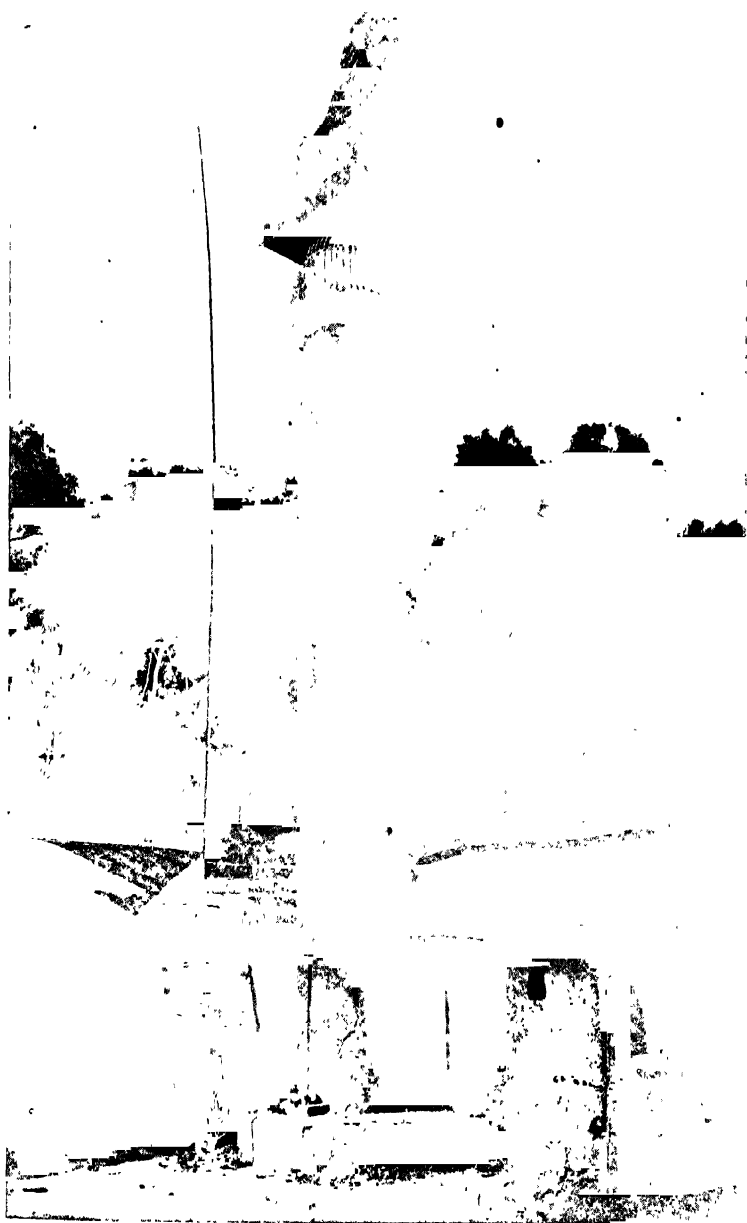
Y

- Yājñavalkya 193; on units of weight,
279.

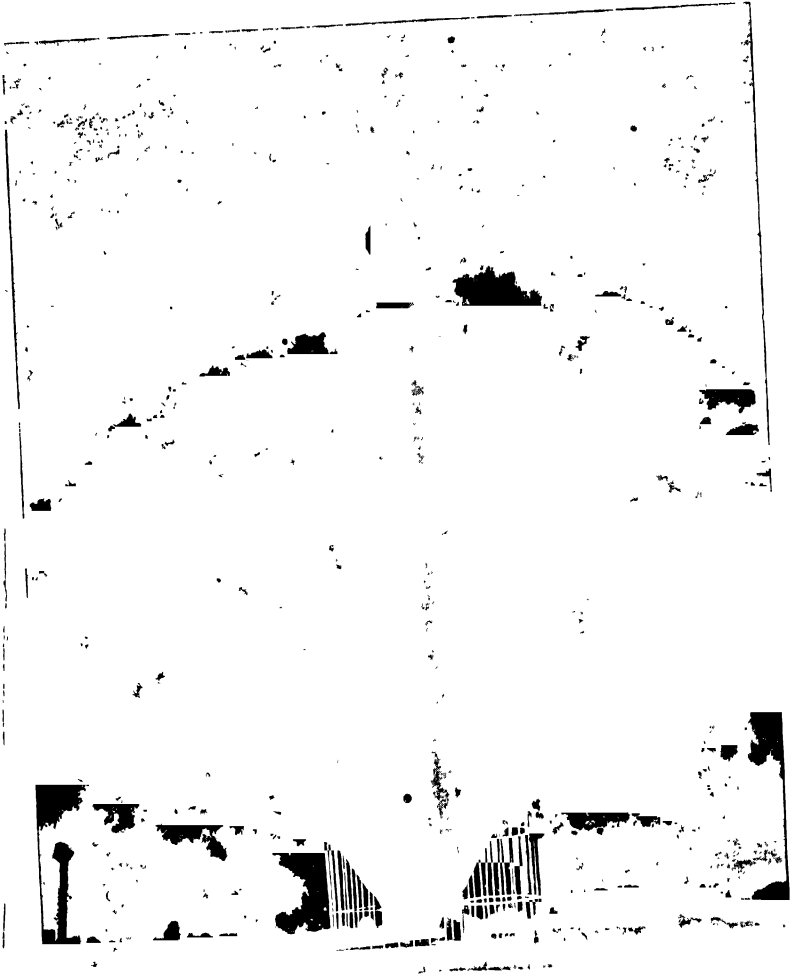
- Yajus samhita*, 262, 264.
Yakkha (Vaeda), 257.
Yakkhas of Himavanta, 217.
Yakshas, sculptural representations
at Patna, 308, 332, 244-345 and
n, 346n. 375, 378-379.
Yasobhadra, a Nirgrantha, 297.
Yaṭṭhāla dagoba, 259.
Yavakrita, 330.
Yavana (Ionians), the, 146,
318.
Yavanalipi, 26.
Yayāti, 330.
(Y)erragudi, 223, 225, 234, 313;
Aśoka's inscription at, 204, 205,
206.
Yogananda, 20, 147.
Yojanas, 172.
Yona, Greek, 35; 217, 222, 225; a
tribe under Aśoka, 154.
Yuddhāmsrausṭi, Auṅrasainya, a
royal epithet of, 14, 15.
Yukta, 200, 226, 227.
Yunnan, South-west China, 319.

Z

- Zabag, 254.
Zachariae, 193.
Zaradros (Hesidrus, Sutlej, Sutudri,
Śatadru), 28.
'Zoroastrian period' in Indian history,
198.



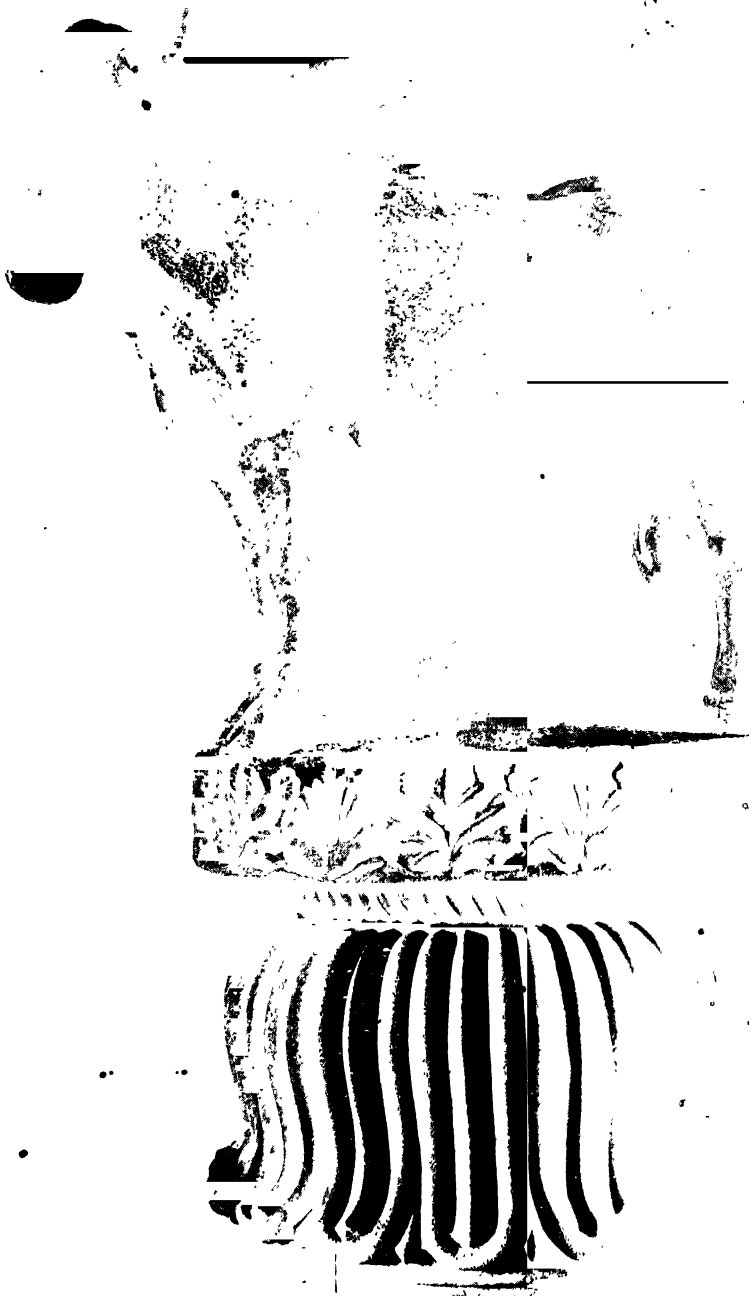
The Lion-Crowned Column of Basrah.



The Lion-Crowned Column of Lauriya-Nandangarh.



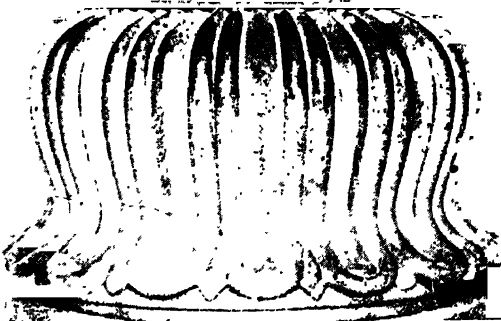
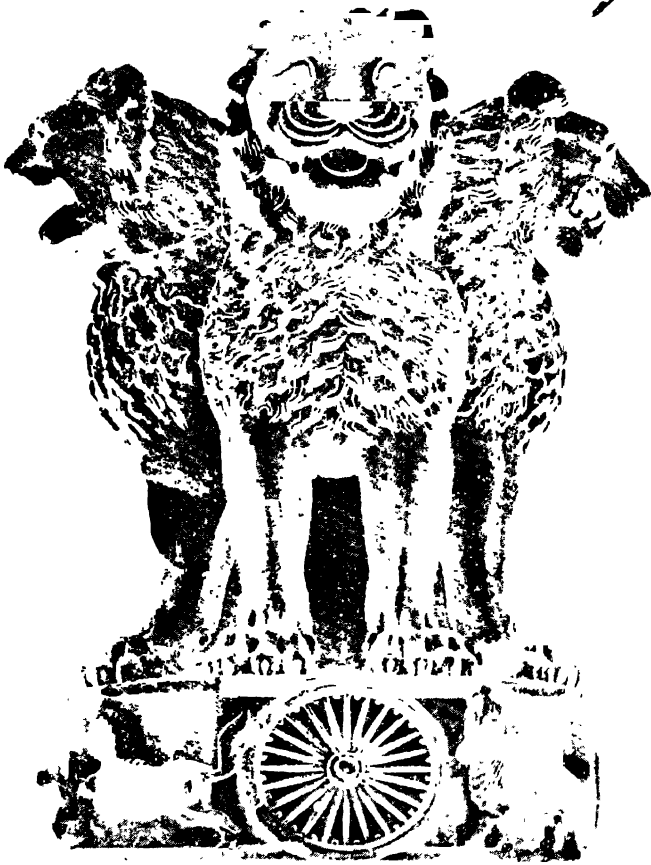
Elephant Capital, Sanskissa.



Bull Capital Rampurva



Lion Capital, Rampurva



Sarnath Lion Capital.



Lion Capital, Sanchi.



Rock-Cut Elephant Dhauri.

Plate X

Elephant from the abacus of the Sarnath Capital.



Horse from the abacus of Sarnath Capital

Plate XII





Lion from the abacus of Sarnath Capital.



Yaksha from Patna, front view



Yaksha from Patna, back view



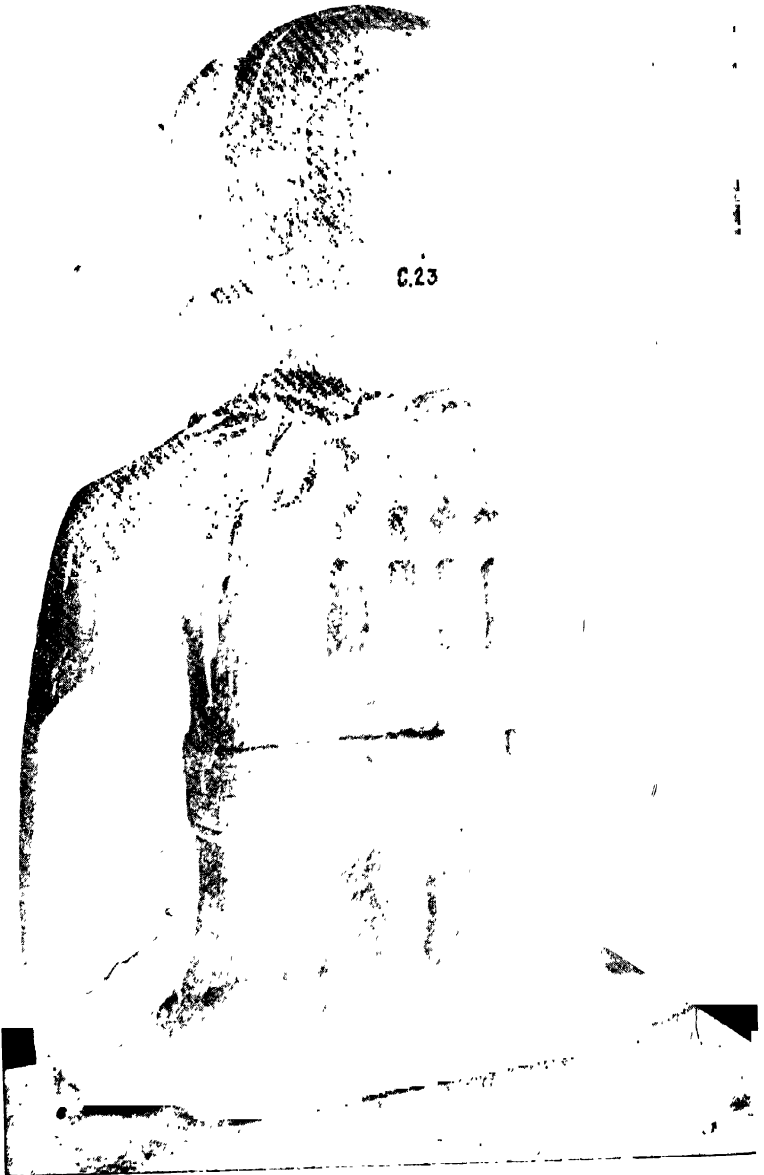
Yaksha from Patna, front view



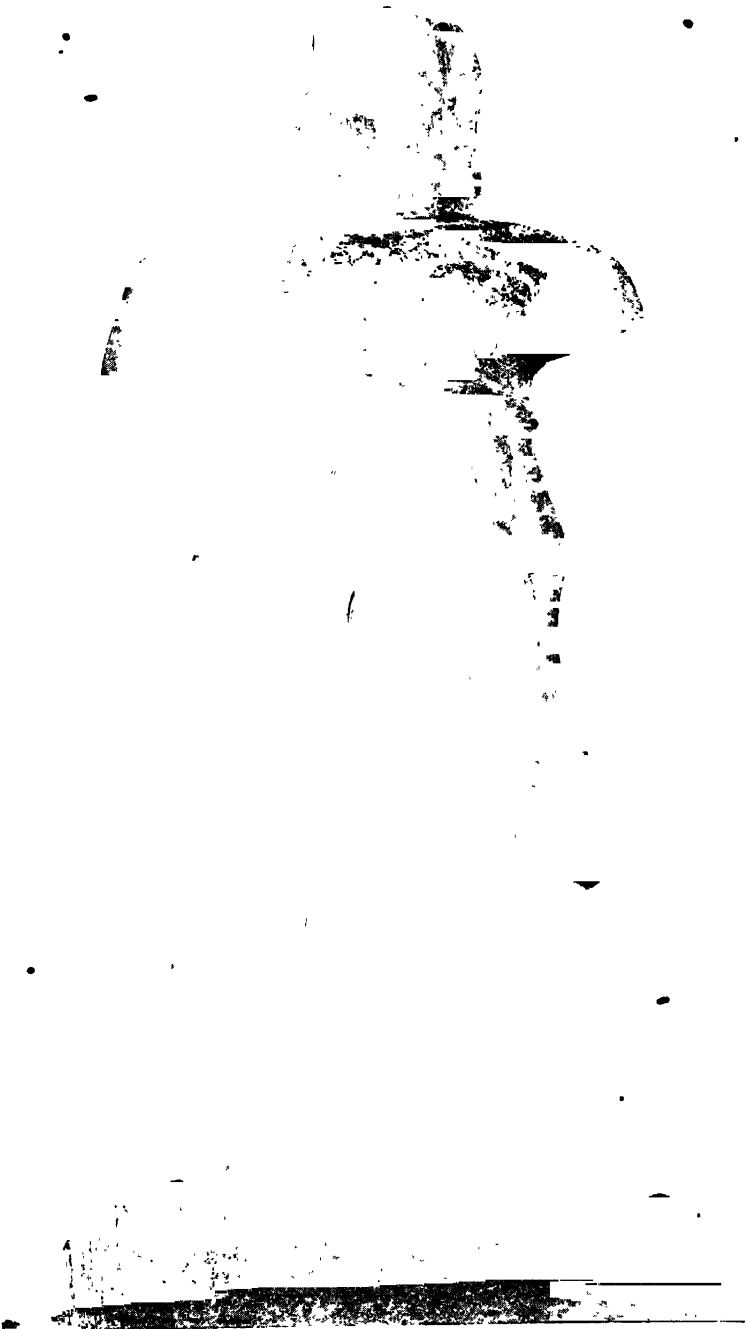
Yaksha from Patna, back view.



Stone torso of a Jain image, Lohanipur.



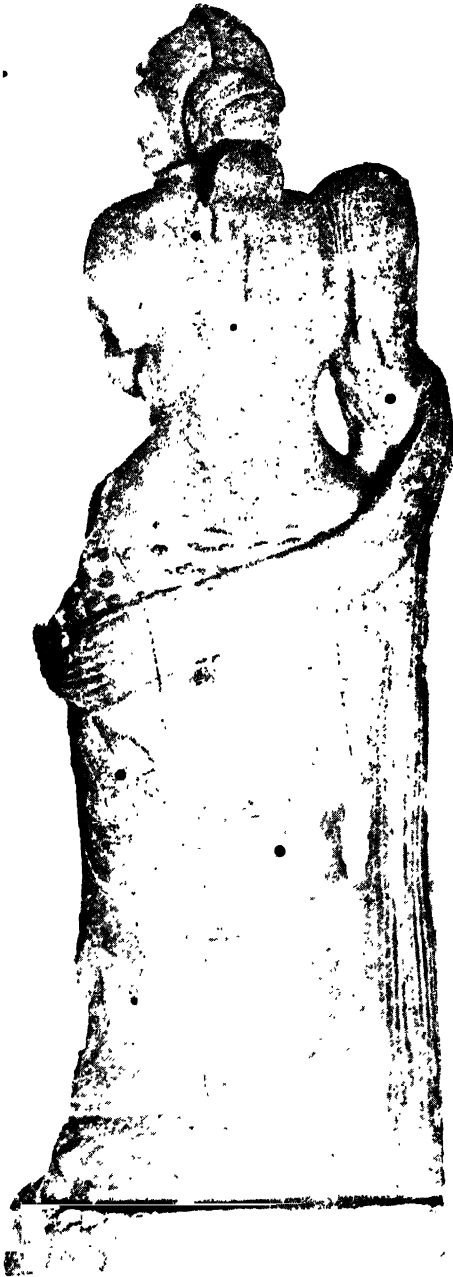
Baroda Yaksha, back view.



Parkham Yaksha.



Didarganj Yaksha, front view



Didarganj Yaksha, back view



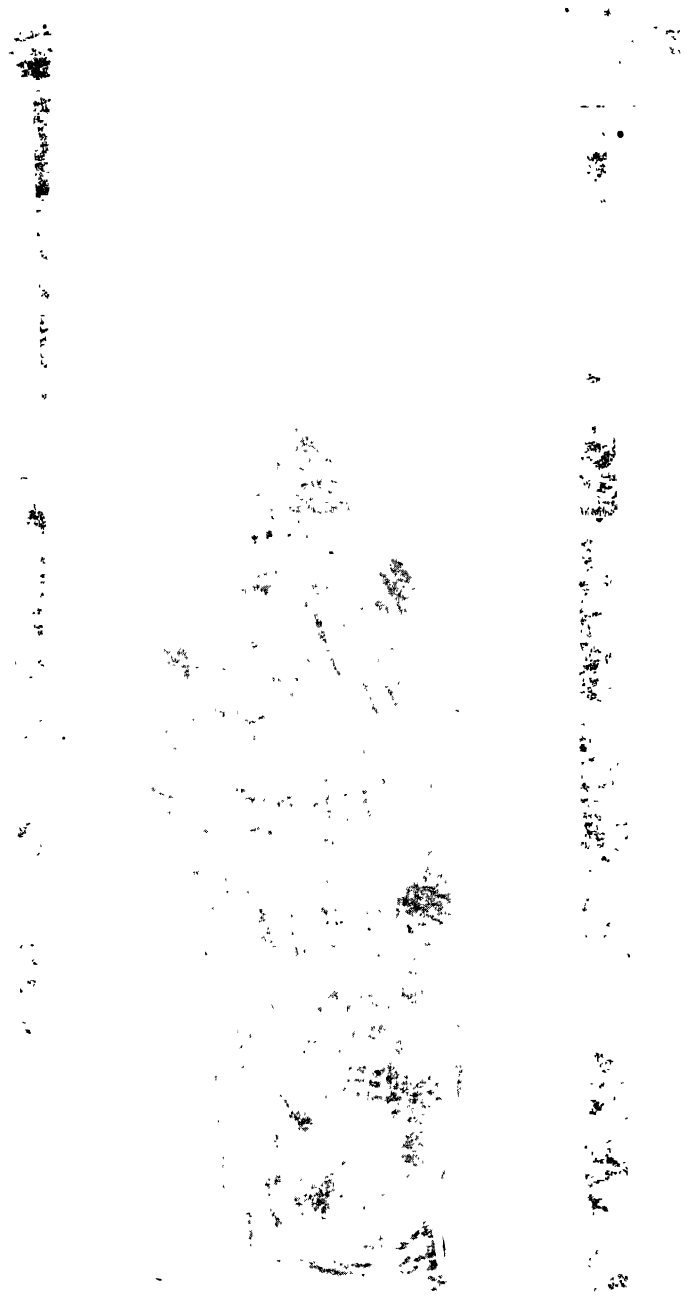
Besnagar Yakshi.



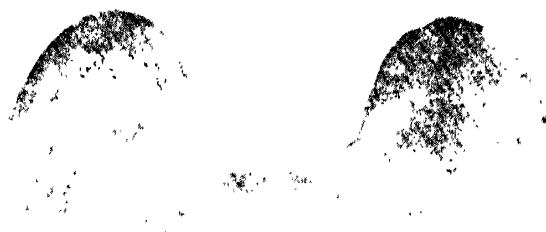
Terracotta from Pāṭaliputra.



Terracotta from Pataliputra.



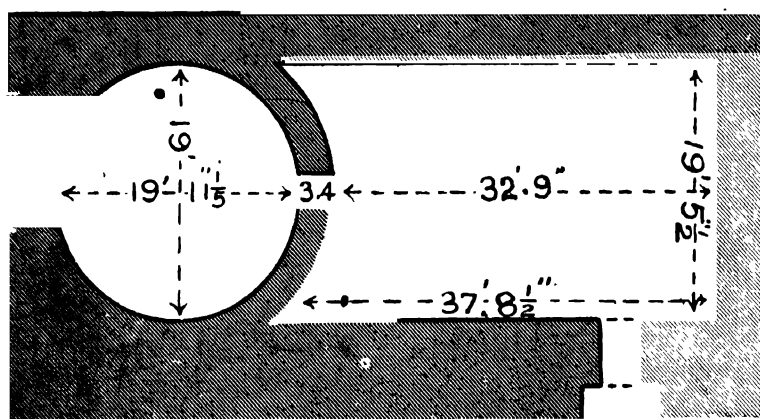
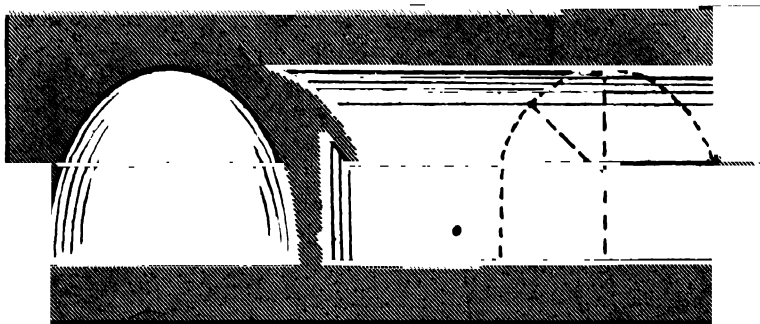
Terracotta from Pataliputra.



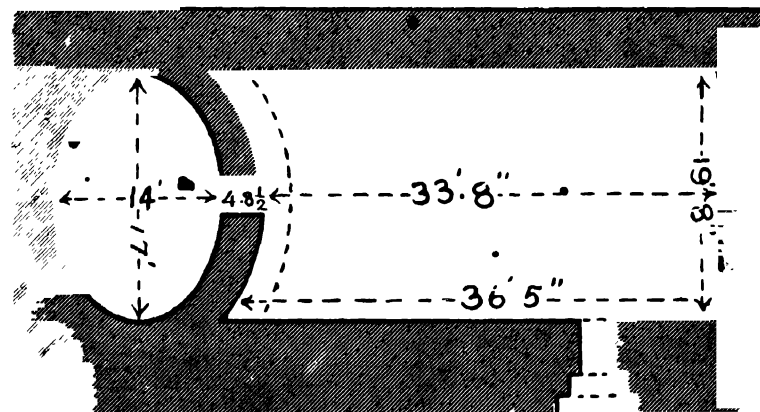
Terracotta from Pāṭaliputra

Plate XXVIII

Terracotta from Pāṭalipūtra



Sudama Cave



Lomas Rishi Cave

1

1

